CANADA'S SCI-FI SOURCE

PARSEC

X-clusive interview

with series creator
Chris Carter

Space Cases

New show filmed in Montreal,
but will we get to see it?

Berni wrightson

Comic book legend talks about
the Swamp Thing

Cdn. $4.25
April/May 1996
Vol. 1, Number 5

Retailer: Display until June 15

0 56698 71606 8 04

INTRODUCING

The Limited Edition TRICORDER™ Mark 1

Destined to become a valuable collectible, the world's first piece of Official STAR TREK® Technology is a real functioning scientific instrument.

This STARFLEET Command Standard for all authorized crew members includes an interactive CD-ROM training manual with Mission Briefings and STARFLEET SCIOPS experiments. Special Limited Edition packaging includes Certificate of Authenticity and Technical Crew Registration documents.

Accurately senses:

- location and strength of potentially harmful electromagnetic radiation
- atmospheric temperature and pressure for weather prediction on Class-M planets
- over 16 million colors for a wide variety of color-match applications, including biological life-form (plant) health assessment
- Stardate clock

Actual CD-ROM screens

TECHNOLOGIES VITAL CORPORATION

Call 1-800-263-0096

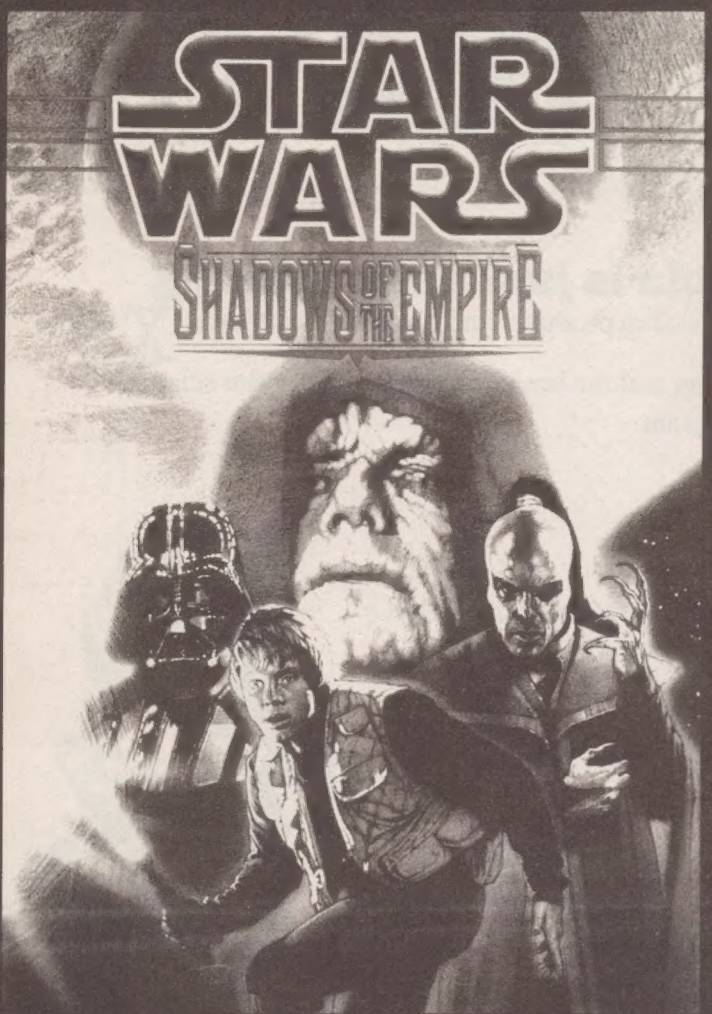
to order or ask about the **TRICORDER™ Mark 1**

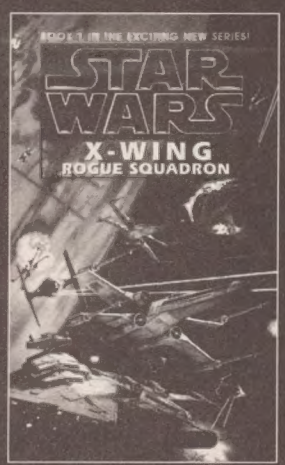
Limited Edition price: $499. Visa accepted.

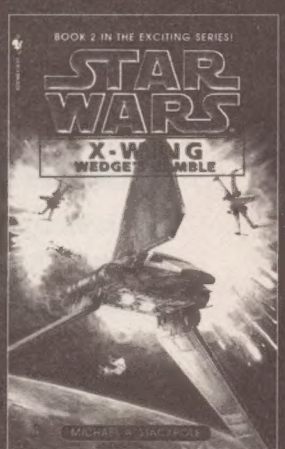
Created by Vital Technologies Corporation, world-recognized leaders in UV and EMF sensing devices, and the first licensees of Official STAR TREK® Technology.

© 1995 Vital Technologies Corporation. Used Under License. STAR TREK and Related Marks are Trademarks of Paramount Pictures. © 1995 Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved.

STAR WARS







THE SCIENCE FICTION PUBLISHING EVENT OF 1996.

Fully authorized by Lucasfilm. A story set during the action of the movies — between "Empire" and "Jedi". *Shadows of the Empire* features all your favourites: Luke, Han, Leia, Darth Vader and a villainous new character almost as evil as Lord Vader himself.

Shadows of The Empire will be the flagship in an incredible armada of exciting new Star Wars® material including: comics, computer games, role playing games and more. Don't miss it!

All Bantam Star Wars® books are also available on BDD Audiocassettes.

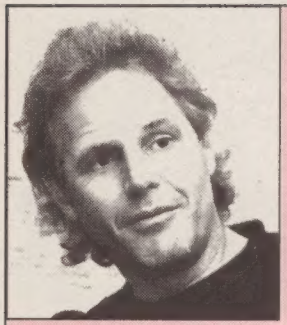
Check out *X-Wing*, the thrilling new Stars Wars® series now on sale in paperback.

BANTAM

® © 1996 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved. Used under authorization

What's inside

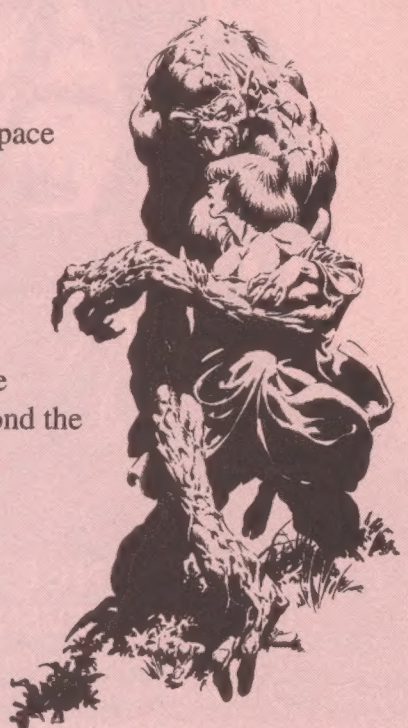
PARSEC



8 **Paranoia is just good thinking**
Series X cutive producer and creator Chris Carter X plains the attraction and the basis for Canada's favorite science fiction program

16 **Space Cases**
Montreal's Cinar Films brings a science fiction space odyssey to the American small screen. But will Canadians ever be able to see it?

28 **Horror fan**
Artist Berni Wrightson will forever be linked to the Swamp Thing. But his love of horror goes far beyond the boundary of the swamp.



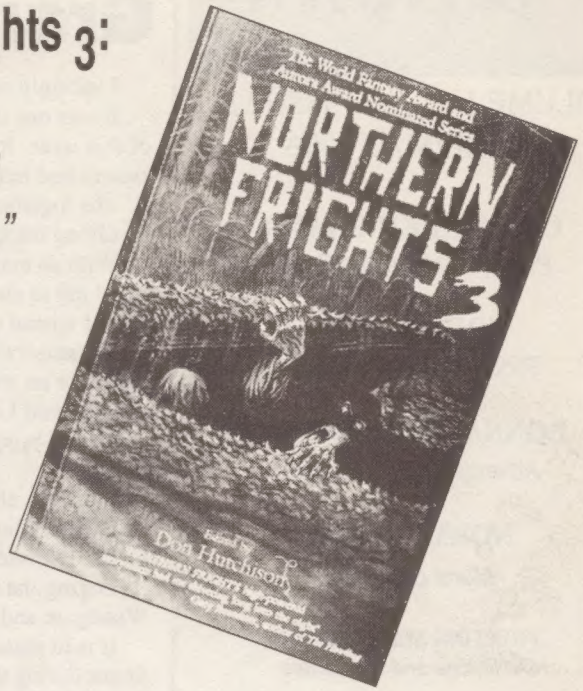
Departments

Publisher's Column	6	Animated Discussion	32
Letters	7, 39	Retrospect	34
Comics	28	Software	36
Fiction	16	Brain Teasers	42

There's nothing to be afraid of

The Toronto Star calls Northern Frights 3:

". . . a leading anthology of original Canadian fantasy and science fiction."



Featuring works by Garfield Reeves-Stevens, Charles De Lint, Robert Bloch, Rudy Kremberg, David Nickle, Robert Charles Wilson, Nancy Baker and Robert Sampson

Get your copy at bookstores across Canada

or order yours directly from Parsec for only $16.95

Copies of the first two books in this annual series are also available
Order Northern Frights (hardcover) for $19.95 or Northern Frights$_2$ for $16.95

All three are just $45

Mail to:

Parsec Marketing Group, Unit G, Suite 108, 1942 Regent St., Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 3Z9

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Send me:

Northern Frights ❑ Northern Frights 2 ❑ Northern Frights 3 ❑ =$_____

VISA, Mastercard and American Express also accepted.

Card number: _____ Expiry date: _____

Signature: _____

Photocopies accepted. Make cheques or money orders payable to Mosaic Press. Add $2.75 for postage and handling, and 7% GST

PARSEC

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 5
APRIL/MAY 1996

CHRIS KREJLGAARD
Publisher/Managing Editor

JOHN LAPPA
Production/Photography

DONNA KREJLGAARD
Advertising Co-ordinator

NORM MAYER
Moral Compass

PRINTING SERVICES BY
Couldridge and Associates

CONTRIBUTORS

Ken Basarke, Stephanie Bedwell-Grime, Brian Belfry, W. Ritchie Benedict, Gregg Chamberlain, Kennedy Gordon, Janet L. Hetherington, Lars Johanson, JEL, John Platt, Ronn Sutton, John Tkachuk, Emru Townsend and Greg Vaillancourt

Cover photo by Ken Staniforth. Courtesy of and copyright© of FOX Broadcasting Company.

Parsec, volume 1 number 5
April/May 1996
UPC — 56698-71606-04

Parsec is published bi-monthly by Parsec Publishing Company, Unit G. Suite 108, 1942 Regent St., Sudbury, Ont., Canada, P3E 3Z9

e-mail: parsec@vianet.on.ca.

Parsec is published each August, October, December, February, April and June.

All of the material contained herein is the property of Parsec Publishing and/or the writers or artists and cannot be reprinted without written permission.

Subscription rate (not including applicable taxes): one year — $25.50, two years — $51.

For advertising information please call (705) 523-1831 or fax (705) 523-5276.

Granted an audience

I jokingly refer to it as sitting at the feet of the Buddha.

It was one of the most anticipated events in Parsec's short life and the raison d'être of this issue. It was *the* interview of the fall season. It was our meeting with X-Files creator and executive producer, Chris Carter.

The logistics of arranging the interview took on the scope and magnitude as one involving the Queen.

With so many people begging for a minute of his time — and, of course, he also has a day job to attend to — arranging for an interview was an exercise involving many people spread over two countries.

Organizers of the Primedia Convention (a convention which was apparently the victim of an erroneous Internet note about their guest of honor), Fox publicity in Toronto and Los Angeles, X-Files staff in Vancouver, writer Janet Herrington and myself all brought our various talents to bear on the matter for the better part of three months.

It was an arduous task to cut through the various levels of bureaucracy — and I thought dealing with the government was difficult — to gain the necessary approvals for the interview. But it was worth it.

During the interview, Carter talked of the influences on his series — especially Watergate and the Night Stalker.

It is in these two areas that Carter and I share a common thread. Living in the United States during the 1970s, I was able to watch a nation's sense of self-worth and its entire psyche diminished by the actions of a handful of men. And if people are considered more distrustful of their elected officials, one only has to look at this moment in history as the reason.

But during the same period, there was also the Night Stalker. A show that still holds my attention and affection to the point where I seriously considered making a run at watching a 36-hour Night Stalker marathon on one of the U.S. networks.

For a couple of seasons, Friday nights (a coincidence?) were home to Carl Kolchak and the gang at the INS — too bad journalism isn't as interesting as Kolchak made it look. It was one of those rare shows, like The X-Files, that schedules were arranged to accommodate.

Week in and week out, Kolchak battled the demons of the nether world and of the human world. You couldn't blame Kolchak for mistrusting the authority figures in his life. His boss, Tony Vincenzo, chiefs of police, politicians and bureaucrats all at one time or another hung poor Karl out to dry.

It's easy to see the influence of the show on The X-Files. Skinner can easily be taken for Vincenzo — a less-blustery and svelte one — but still the sympathetic boss who will help his charges when he can, but is hesitant to go too far out on a limb. It is also easy to draw parallels between the cigarette-smoking man and any one of the faceless bureaucrats that stifled Kolchak's every effort to publicize the dangers in and around Chicago. Neither wants the truth to be told. And of course, co-workers in both series cast a wary, disbelieving eye toward the main character's endeavours.

The distrust for authority is pervasive in both series — but because of the events of the past 20 years, it is more palatable to viewers now than it was during the early to mid-70s. And just as much fun.

❑❑❑

By the way, I'd like to introduce you to the newest member of the Parsec family — some would say cult — Norm Mayer.

With the departure of Sherri Sten from our art department, Norm (who has a wealth of journalism experience) has opted to take us up on our offer to join the magazine. As of this writing, Norm's tasks with the magazine are as yet undefined. Although, to paraphrase Arthur J. Carlson, general manager of WKRP in Cincinnati, Ohio, I am sure that whatever task falls to Norm it will be essential, but otherwise meaningless, to the operation of the magazine. Just joking!

— Chris

PARSEC LETTERS

Cover story contained errors

Dear Editor:

First off, let me say thank you for the Forever Knight cover, story and quiz. It was wonderful, seeing a Canadian publication writing about a show filmed in Canada.

However, the person who wrote the article and quiz got a few things wrong. First off, he said that Forever Knight is currently in its fourth season.

I wish.

Actually, it ran on CBS Crime Time After Prime Time in the 1992-93 season, beginning the first week of May. The last new episode of that season was shown in March 1992.

Then Forever Knight was brought back from the dead, so to speak, and was shown in syndication in 1994-95. In the summer of 1995, the USA Network picked it up and a third season started filming. The USA Network cancelled it and a German company is helping to finance the rest of the third season.

Continued on Page 39

WE WANT YOUR LETTERS

We are interested in knowing what you think about what you have seen (or haven't seen) in Parsec. Letters should be no more than 175 words in length and should include your name, address and telephone number (which won't be published)

Send them to:
The Editor
Parsec
Unit G, Suite 108
1942 Regent Street
Sudbury, Ontario
P3E 3Z9
or fax them to (705) 523-5276
or e-mail us at
parsec@vianet.on.ca

Come visit the Merril in its new location

Come visit The Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy in its new home -- the wonderful and whimsical Lillian H. Smith building at the corner of College and Spadina Streets in Toronto!

Flanked by two huge bronze gryphons and boasting a dungeon for a basement, this architectural delight is the perfect setting for Canada's largest collection of speculative fiction and one of the world's premier popular culture collections.

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS

The Merril Collection houses in excess of 25,000 books and 18,000 periodicals including...
A comprehensive collection of Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy
Specialty Science Fiction presses
Utopian & dystopian literature
The Benghis collection of the works of Jules Verne
Major pulp SF & F collection
Collection of original artwork
Bibliographies & critical material

Join the Friends of the Merril Collection

The Friends of the Merril Collection is a non-profit organization established in 1970 to support the collection through a wide range of activities.

Benefits of membership include a subscription to SOL RISING, the newsletter of the Friends, free admission or special reduced member rates to Friends' events, discounts at a variety of specialty bookstores and voting privileges in Friends' activities.

For complete details, contact: Theresa Wojtasiewicz
399 Dupont Street, #401, Toronto, Ontario M5R 1W3
Phone: (416) 588-5857, Fax: (416) 588-6495

THE MERRIL COLLECTION OF SCIENCE FICTION, SPECULATION AND FANTASY

A Special Collection of the Toronto Public Library
239 College St, Toronto, ON, M5T 1R5 (416) 393-7748, Fax: (416) 393-7741

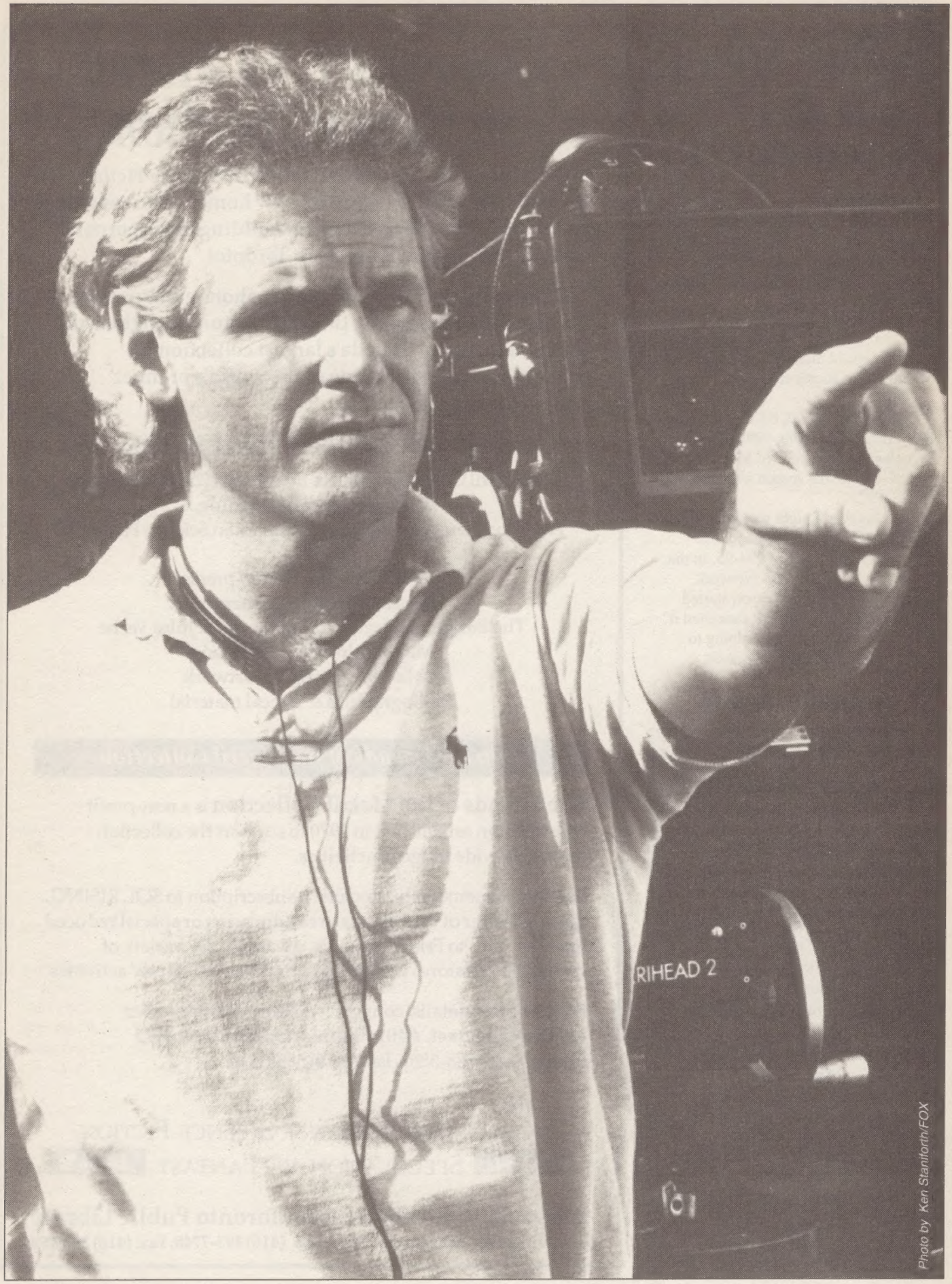


Photo by Ken Staniforth/FOX

treme paranoia

X-Files creator Chris Carter taps into viewers fears of big government and the unknown but manages to tell good, scary stories in the bargain

By
JANET L. HETHERINGTON

The creator, writer and executive producer of the cult TV hit, The X-Files, Chris Carter has tapped into society's rampant paranoia about government cover-ups and covert operations. But he really just wants to scare your pants off.

Once upon a time, people used to tell fairy tales about witches and warlocks, vampires and goblins, and big bad wolves that wanted to eat all the little piggies. But in today's fast-paced, high-tech, smart-chip society, science has built a house of synthetic brick against the wolves snarling at the door.

Chris Carter is blowing that house down.

The immense popularity of his cult — or occult — television series, the X-Files, indicates that people still have an intense fascination for the unexplained and the unexplainable.

"I think the show ultimately is about unexplainable phenomena," Carter says. "We don't try to explain it; we just basically explore and use it as a way into a good, scary story."

And viewers like a good, scary story.

The X-Files, filmed in Vancouver, has so far enjoyed three successful seasons on the Fox Network and on Global Television in Canada — tapping into a devoted audience with an appetite for Carter's eerie offerings.

Following the credo "The truth is out there," the show is a unique blend of Dragnet and The Twilight Zone.

An average day at the office for Carter's F.B.I. agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) often leads them to a crime scene — normal duty for many law enforcement professionals.

But when Mulder and Scully find clues that point them in the direction of poltergeists, satanic cults, alien abductors, shape shifters, pyrotechnic telepaths and other bizarre suspects, that's when the X-Files really hits its stride.

"If you want to do a ghost story, you want to find an interesting, factual way into it . . . an incident or event, something that gives you a reason to tell a good ghost story," Carter says.

"The episodes are only as good as they are believable, and to be believable, they have to seem real —as if they could happen in your backyard," he adds.

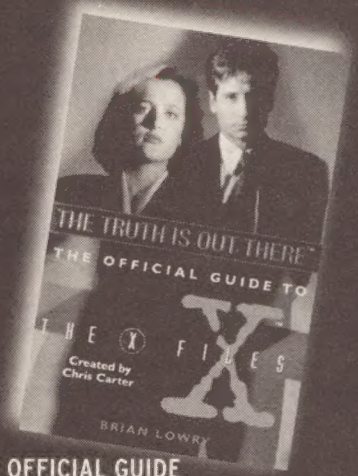
The Ying and Yang characters of Mulder and Scully make the paranormal premises of the X-Files work.

While a dedicated professional and ace detective, Mulder is also an obsessed believer in all things supernatural. And every time Scully snaps on her antiseptic rubber gloves, she brings her background in medicine — and a dose of reality — to each oddball case.

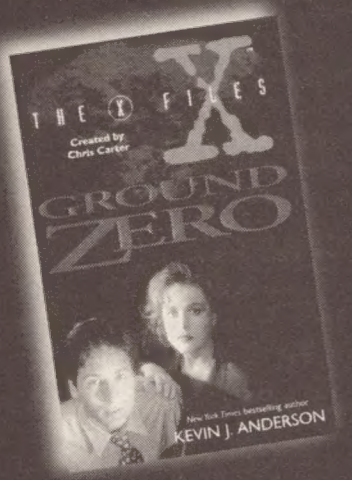
"She (Scully) represents science, and Mulder represents the paranormal or the para-scientific," Carter affirms.

The X-Files also gets its edge from the underlying theme that all is not as it may appear to be — that Big Government has

THE BOOKS ARE OUT THERE



THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO THE X FILES by Brian Lowry • $21 softcover



THE X FILES: GROUND ZERO by Kevin J. Anderson • $28 hardcover

X-Files Literature

It's out there at your favourite bookstore

HarperCollinsCanadaLtd

"...almost every day you can see a place where the government has lied to you, or is apologizing for lying to you."

many things to hide, and like an onion, the truth will only be revealed by peeling away the many layers.

It's a message that viewers of the X-Files buy into without reservation; governments have proved to be less than noble and not entirely truthful about many matters in recent years.

"You pick up the papers," Carter says, "and almost every day you can see a place where the government has lied to you, or is apologizing for lying to you. I think that these stories are so common and pervasive, that everyone out there has a certain degree of distrust of authority."

Still, Carter maintains that the X-Files presents a "question authority" message, rather than an "anti-government" message.

And, Carter confirms that there are no actual X-Files.

"I made that up," he says. "The 'X-Files' is a term I gave to what I imagined to be a group of files sitting in a place on a dusty shelf somewhere, locked away, that the F.B.I. did not want investigated for reasons that are still coming to light."

Early Influences

The paranoid and paranormal elements found in the X-Files reflect Carter's personal experiences. "When I was 16 or 17 years old, Watergate was happening," Carter comments. "I think that was a very powerful event in my life . . . more powerful, certainly, than the moon landing."

Carter's desire to put spooky stuff on screen also stems from an early childhood love affair with the Night Stalker television program.

"I loved that show as a kid," Carter remembers.

"I wanted to watch that show every night of the week, and I wanted to create a show that I felt everyone else would want to watch every night of the week. The X-Files is really a result of that."

Carter even attempted to obtain the services of Night Stalker star Darren McGavin for the X-Files, offering him the second season role of Senator Matheson.

"I was very interested in casting him in year one and in year two — it didn't work out," Carter says. "We hadn't approached him for year three because there hasn't been the right role. But I think it would be a great homage."

Interestingly, Carter rejects the notion that his television creation is "science fiction."

"I was never truly a science fiction fan as a kid, nor have I ever been a classic science fiction fan," Carter admits. "I never really wanted the label to begin with —the science fiction label —but I've taken it because it's a kind of science fiction show . . . but really, it's more science fact," he explains.

Carter does acknowledge the appeal and possibilities that science fiction offers. "There was an episode that we did called Soft Light," Carter says. "It's the episode where the shadows consume the unfortunate people who happen to step into them.

"It was a very science-fictiony kind of episode for us, but it was extremely popular," Carter recalls.

But Carter has resisted moving too far into the genre of pure science fiction. "We're dealing with the F.B.I.," Carter notes, "and if you go too far, it's going to take the show into a realm where I think it

Photos by JEL

will hurt it rather than help it."

Carter's Vision

As creator, writer and executive producer, Carter is a visionary with a personal agenda for the series, which he sees running for a few more seasons.

"I think we'll go five years at least, possibly six, but we've got a good long run ahead of us," Carter says.

Twentieth Television recently sold the rerun rights for 97 X-Files episodes to cable network FX, for an unprecedented $600,000 per show.

Now that the X-Files is a bona-fide international hit, it's hard to imagine the difficulties Carter first faced trying to get the show off the ground.

"It was a very tough sell," he says, "because as you can appreciate, there was nothing like it on television. When I went in and told them what I wanted to do, I was enthusiastic about the Night Stalker — but all the studio executives were too young to ever remember that show!"

"I went in and sold it as 'two F.B.I. agents investigating paranormal phenomena'," Carter continues, "and they had no idea what they were buying!"

While there are eight writers currently working on the X-Files, Carter continues to write many of the episodes himself. His hands-on approach carried over into casting the lead roles for the show.

"I chose David and Gillian," he says. "We went out and saw hundreds of actors for each of the male and female roles. I found David and knew immediately that he was Agent Mulder."

> "We went out and saw hundreds of actors for each of the male and female roles. I found David and knew immediately that he was Agent Mulder."

Carter also found his Scully, but that proved to be another tough sell.

"It was a little harder with Gillian," Carter remembers. "When she came into the room, I swear I knew she was Agent Scully, but I couldn't get the network or the studio to see what I saw. So she had to come in a few times, and ultimately I had to stand up and say, 'This is the person I want; I don't want anyone else!' I think that now, they can't imagine anyone else as Scully."

Carter essentially put his career on the line for the X-Files, but his instincts were right on the money — proving that there is indeed a market for scary TV.

"They (the network) really didn't know what they had until about, I'd say, the second or third episode of the series," comments Carter, "and then all of a sudden they saw that this was something that could really catch on."

It's no coincidence that the recent surge of speculative series found on prime-time

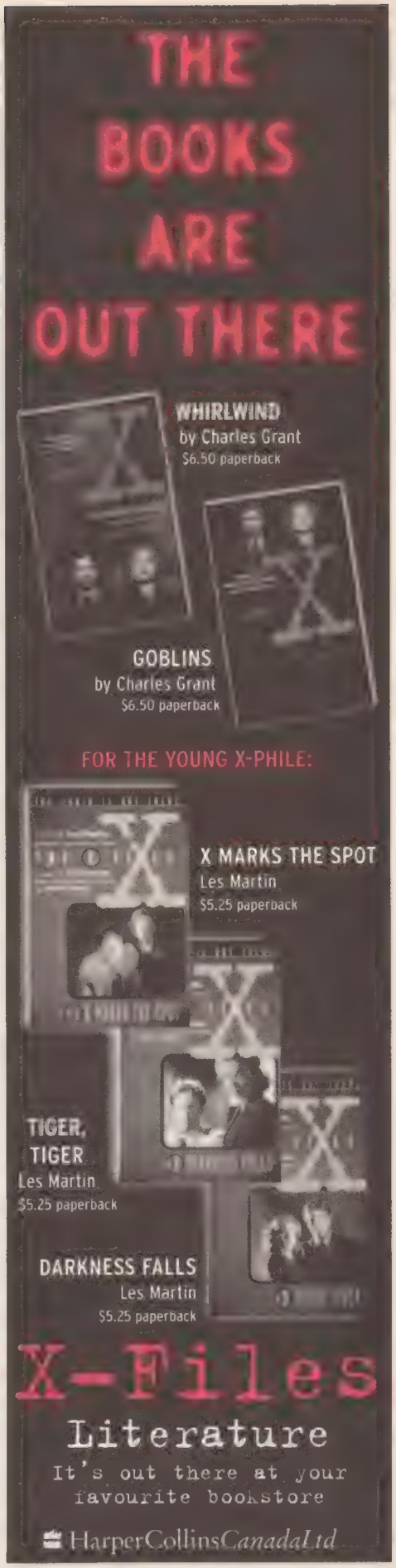


Photo courtesy of FOX Broadcasting

A true hands-on executive producer, Carter has written and directed a number of episodes from the series first day. Here he lines up a shot during a recent filming session in the Vancouver area.

television follows hot on the heels of the X-Files' success.

"I think that they have chosen to do tonefully what we do, but I think that it's going to be very hard to imitate this show unless someone clones it exactly," Carter says of such shows as American Gothic and Nowhere Man.

"What it's done," he says, "is shown that there's an appetite for science fiction on network television."

Internet Files

Thanks to the X-Files' numerous fans, (the X-Philes), Carter's show has become a hot franchise item as well — spawning comic books, trading cards, magazines, books and even a proposed movie.

"You can probably plan to see it on the screens in a couple of summers from now," Carter advises. "The script is in the works right now."

Carter has an expressed interest in the show's fan following, often cruising the X-Files newsgroups on the Internet. "I'm a big lurker on the Internet," he confesses. "I read the stuff on all the major online services — Delphi, America Online, Compuserve and The Internet — and so I'm really a student of those communications. It has never changed the direction of the show, but I really take the things that I read to heart."

"I use it like instant fan mail or instant criticism of the show," continues Carter. "You can get a viewer response almost immediately these days, so it's a terrific tool. Sometimes I get very depressed by it, and sometimes I'm very elated by it, but it's always helpful to me," he says.

As The Internet and online newsgroups joyfully dissect each X-Files episode, discussing and analyzing, postulating and presuming, they are ultimately bestowing upon the program a mythic status.

For here, in the X-Files, are the witches and warlocks, vampires and goblins and big bad wolves found in tales of yore — with valiant Agents Mulder and Scully stepping in each week to save the day.

Meanwhile, creator Chris Carter speaks of a much more modest intent: "I just wanted to do a good, scary show that kept you on the edge of your seat . . . and hopefully, I've succeeded in that."

'Freakish' luck land Regina man on X-Files

By
CALVIN DANIELS

As it often occurs, life is just a case of being in the right place at the right time.

If you don't believe it, just ask Alvin Law.

Law was attending a telethon in Vancouver when the producers of the X-Files suddenly came calling.

"Somebody had seen me on the telethon, and as weird as life is, they had a script about a serial killer in a town of ex-Barnum and Bailey-type circus freaks," said the Regina, Sask., resident.

One of the scenes called for an armless preacher to reside over the graveside burial which sets the stage for the show.

It was the perfect fit for Law who was born without arms as a result of the drug, thalidomide. So the network made the call.

"I had never seen the show," admits Law. "My first reaction was, 'What is that?'."

But then he decided it was still a role on television, so there he was in front of the camera, turning pages of the Bible with his toes and presiding over the funeral of a former circus freak.

"A majority of the people at the funeral were kind of freakish looking," he says looking back to the shooting of the scene.

While the scene was admittedly strange, it showed Law something about the X-Files.

"It was pretty eye-opening. There were all these rather freakish looking people . . . with these multiple tattoos and body piercing and colored hair . . . and they were all real. The realism of the show, it was so important in setting it (the show) up," says Law.

"They continually went to great lengths to make the people real, and that impressed me."

While the episode sounds off-beat, Law says it is well done.

And that had been one of his concerns.

"I was initially concerned with the whole element of how they were going to portray this thing," he says. "I wouldn't have been happy if they'd showed it in a negative way.

"But they respected the differences of the individuals. The way they did it was almost ingenious. They were simply stating a fact.

"I know there are still some circuses with sideshows. For example, the show included the Enigma, a man with his entire body tattooed like a puzzle. Away from the

Photo courtesy of FOX Broadcasting

In one of the most memorable scenes in the series last season, Mulder and Scully attend the funeral of a side-show freak, only to have the body burst through the ground and leave the funeral. Alvin Law of Regina had the opportunity to proceed over the mayhem.

Subscribe to Parsec for less than $3 an issue!

Mail to: Parsec, Unit G, Suite 108, 1942 Regent St., Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 3Z9

Telephone: (705)523-1831, Fax: (705)523-5276

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **Prov:** _____ **Code:** _____

Telephone: _____

❑ **One year is $17.82 + $1.25 GST = $19.07**

❑ **Two years is $35.64 + $2.49 GST = $38.13**

Ontario residents must add 8 per cent sales tax.
Photocopies accepted.

Side Effects

Working Designs of Redding, Ca., has announced a scheduled April release date for its second game for the SEGA Saturn entertainment. The suggested retail price is $67.99 (U.S.).

Shining Wisdom casts the player as Mars, the son of the most famous hero in the Odegan Empire. After some gentle prodding by his grandfather, Mars is convinced to go to the castle where his father offered his services to the king. As fate would have it, Mars finds himself battling the four terrors for the survival of the empire.

Along the way the player can collect a number of items that will help him perform magical feats or get into areas of the world.

Shining Wisdom is a 32-bit game and offers players an overhead perspective (like the Legend of Zelda series) and switches to real-time arcade format for combat sequences.

❑❑❑

White Wolf alumni Bill Bridges and Andrew Greenberg have joined Tucker, GA.-based computer game design company, Holistic Design.

The two have put their heads together to design The Fading Suns. The roleplaying game, which will make its debut this summer, will be based in science fiction and promises, according to Bridges, not to contain the usual stereotypes that usually inhabit science fiction universes.

❑❑❑

White Wolf has unveiled a plan to expand its Rage universe with the release of The Legacy of the Tribes. The company will allow players to vote on which characters from the Werewolf: the Apocalypse will return. Beginning April 15 and continuing until May 15, the company will collect votes from fans. The Garou characters who receive the most votes will be the ones who return in Legacy of the Tribe. Votes can be cast either by calling (404) 292-WOLF (between 9 a.m. and noon and between 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. EST), by mail to 780 Park North Blvd., Clarkston, GA., 30021, or by
e-mail to ACHILLI@AOL.COM.

camera he is part of a show that is still "very big in Europe."

Law didn't arrive on the set with a list of credits, but in many ways, he says, his life prepared him for acting.

One person on the set asked him how long he had been acting, a question that prompted a rather unusual answer.

"I told him probably my entire life," explains Law.

Much of the acting was part of overcoming situations he faced living without arms.

Acting is also part of being a public speaker, which is Law's business these days.

"As a professional speaker, you're always kinda up there on stage. You do have to have a certain amount of ham in you."

Yet, Law admits he lucked out in the role. Another actor in the scene was amazed Law had earned a speaking role his first time in front of the camera.

"He told me he had been acting for eight years and had never had a speaking part."

Looking back, Law says he did get his sense of why the X-Files has become one of the most popular sci-fi shows on television.

"They get all their ideas from the underground press, or they watch daytime talk shows and then they try to find real-life examples," he says, adding that is why the show has become such a hit.

"I think it's a very '90s type of show. It's based on fact and then they bend the lines."

Still the Fox Network was concerned with Law's acceptance of his role.

"I got a telephone call from the director making sure that I was OK with this," he says.

The show even addressed the need for acceptance, says Law.

In one scene, the local sheriff suggests, "Some of them (the circus performers) may be different on the outside, but it's what's inside that counts, and on the inside, they're as normal as anybody."

The sheriff goes on to explain the problem usually lies with others.

"It's just been my experience that other people have a harder time accepting these people with deformities than they do themselves," the sheriff tells Fox Mulder and Dana Scully.

As for the stars, Law admits that there wasn't much time to mingle with them, since they stayed pretty much to themselves during shooting.

"I chatted with them (David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson) a couple of times when we were standing around, but it was pretty much 'how's the weather?' thing," he says.

While the script was a rather strange one, Law says so was the entire experience of filming the episode.

> "The only reason that I got it was because I fit the part. It wasn't like I had spent 15 years of my life to get a big role — I just fell into it."

But Law is pragmatic about the role.

"The only reason that I got it was because I fit the part," he admitted. "It wasn't like I had spent 15 years of my life to get a big role — I just fell into it. "But it was a distinct thrill. In every sense of the word, it was exciting."

But it was also work. Even though he was only in one scene, Law was out in the cool March Vancouver weather from 8 a.m. to 7:45 p.m.

"They're not kidding when they say it takes a whole day to shoot a scene. It's absolutely true," he says.

Law says one other aspect of the experience that has stayed with him is the amount of Canadian talent that is used to put the weekly episodes together.

"There was this amazing production team of talented people from Canada," he says. "almost everybody that works on the set is a Canadian."

And the level of this talent is illustrated by the fact that the show keeps being shot in Canada.

"The talent behind the scenes is quite remarkable," Law says. "The lengths they go to make it look American, but it speaks loudly of how we can produce shows just as well as they do.

"And Americans probably believe that it's done in the States," he laughs.

Law isn't expecting to suddenly find himself inundated with television offers, but if Hollywood called, "I'd have to strongly consider it. I'd be lying if I said there isn't a certain type of lure to it."

★

The truth can be found inside book

By
W. RITCHIE BENEDICT

Television executives have a bad habit of squashing shows that dare to be different.

Those that make it — The Twilight Zone, Laugh-In, Star Trek and All in the Family — usually turn out to be big hits. The cards were stacked against the X-Files from the beginning (Brisco County Jr. was touted as the big hit that season), yet somehow it made it in prime time.

The first chapter of The Official Guide to The X-Files, by Los Angeles television editor Brian Lowry, details the selling job producer Chris Carter had to do just to get to the pilot stage.

For years, serious researchers of the odd and the paranormal have waited for a show that would popularize their favorite topics without being silly or condescending. The marvel is the X-Files manages to do that and appeal to a wide audience.

It is appropriate that the X-Files has two guides — the official and the unofficial — reflecting the attitudes of Fox Mulder and Dana Scully toward the strange phenomena that they deal with each week — UFO conspiracies, phantoms, cults weird serial killers and various mutated monsters.

Some of the roots for the X-Files include the B movies of the 1950s, Stephen King, The Night Stalker of the '70s, Watergate and the Roswell UFO Crash.

It was a concern for Carter from the very start that the show should have a realistic look to it as distinguished from the low-budget pot-boilers Hollywood usually makes when dealing with the supernatural.

Another crucial decision in the making of the X-Files was that it show other aspects of the paranormal, not just base programs on UFOs alone.

A chapter on the technical work being done behind the scenes illustrates just what Gillian Anderson means when she discusses the amount of work that lay ahead in the series. The audience tends to forget the amount of script-writing, research, casting, etc that goes into any hit show. We also concentrate on the two main leads, forgetting that there are a number of regular and semi-regular players (Deep Throat, Mr. X, Assistant Director Walter Skinner and the Cigarette Smoking Man).

All the secondary players rate full biographies and their comments are often illuminating. William B.Davis (the Cigarette Smoking Man) sees his character as burnt out and not evil — "but rather as being on a crusade to save the world."

Fans will find a complete description of each episode right up to the first one aired during this season, along with background information, air dates, cast members, settings, etc.

One of the highlights of the book are the marginal pieces of dialogue and trivia questions about the show. For those who would follow such things, there is even a chart showing the ups and downs of the ratings over the past three seasons, as well as the reviews of television critics.

Until a more complete version comes along, I think you will find "The Truth is in Here." The Official Guide to the X-Files is essential for X-Filphiles and it is a cut above the average television-based book, just as the show itself is a cut above average.

Not the usual pub song

Filk songs are the science fiction society's version of folk songs. The melody can either be original or borrowed from other songs. Filk songs have been sung about Star Trek, Babylon 5 and, of course, the X-Files. Some creative minds who attended the last BanffCon, celebrated the show's success by composing the following musical tribute. It is sung to the tune of "Help."

Mulder's Lament

Help!
I need someone.
Help!
Can't trust anyone.
Help!
I need someone.
Help me.

When I was younger, aliens took my sis away.
We never saw a thing from her, until just yesterday,
I had to prove that what they told me was a lie.
I signed up with the government — I joined the F.B.I.

Help me, Deep Throat, I'm feeling down,
And I would appreciate you being 'round.
Help me get my feet back on the ground.
Won't you please, please help me?
And now my life has changed in oh so many ways.
My independence seems to have vanished in the maze.

But every now and then I feel so insecure.
I know I just need you like I've never done before.

Scully, help me if you can, they took Deep Throat down.
And I do appreciate you being 'round.
Help me get my feet back on the ground.
Won't you please, please help me?

Now Scully's gone and they're trying to shut me down.
New partners, plots and crimes — a good friend to be found.
Now Scully's changed her tune but there's so much to do
To try and bring the government 'round to our point of view

Scully, help me if you can, they took Deep Throat down.
And I do appreciate you being 'round.
Help me get my feet back on the ground.
Won't you please, please help me?

Help me
Help me
Help me!

A case for a little space

By
JANET L. HETHERINGTON

Peter David, Bill Mumy and Montreal's Cinar Films are bringing Nickelodeon's newest science fiction series for kids to 3D life

Take one popular author, Peter David (Star Trek, Incredible Hulk), and add accomplished actor/writer/musician Bill Mumy (Lost In Space/Babylon 5).

Mix with a successful Montreal production company, Cinar Films Ltd. (Little Lulu, Million Dollar Babies) and you've got the creative recipe for Space Cases, Nickelodeon's new comedy-adventure television show set in outer space.

Shot in Montreal with a largely Canadian cast, Space Cases is about a group of star academy students whose spaceship gets sucked into a spatial rip, stranding them on the other side of the galaxy.

The first of the series' 13 episodes was broadcast on Nickelodeon, in the United States last March.

How did a U.S. broadcaster end up with a Canadian-produced series?

"Nickelodeon was in the market for a kid's science fiction series," David explains. "They approached my manager with the possibility of a science fiction series aimed at kids, and she in turn approached myself and Bill. We put this series together."

"Nickelodeon, for a variety of reasons, decided to make this a co-production deal with a Canadian outfit called Cinar," David continues.

"Cinar is putting up some of the money and they also arranged for the production facilities."

"Actually, there is no co-production treaty between Canada and the United States. We tell people that we've teamed up with Nickelodeon," comments Cinar's Director of Communications Carolyn Archambault.

Photo courtesy of Cinar Films

U.S. broadcaster Nickelodeon was in the market for a science fiction program, so they approached Lost in Space alumni Billy Mumy. Space Cases is the result. Like Mumy's earlier show, this one features a crew that can't find its way home. At presstime, there were no Canadian takers for the Canadian-made production aimed at teenaged viewers.

"It's not the first time that Cinar has teamed up with Nick. They have also been airing two of our most popular shows, Are You Afraid of the Dark? and The Busy World of Richard Scary," she adds.

3D Lost In Space

Many of the elements found in Space Cases have a familiar ring to them — a lost starship crew trying to get home, a busted-in-rank commander stuck on board, and an android running the ship — but co-creators David and Mumy are giving the series a humorous spin that Nickelodeon's teenaged viewers will appreciate.

"It's going to be science fiction with a real skewed sensibility, which makes sense because it's my sensibility," David says.

Cinar is using sophisticated production techniques to bring David's and Mumy's vision to life.

Both the space station and the star cruiser featured on the show are being created using state-of-the-art 3D animation.

"We have a complete post-production facility, and we have just acquired some pretty powerful 3D software. That will be used to do a number of the special effects as well as the creation of the spaceship, Christa, so you're going to see some powerful effects," says Archambault.

Stars and Superstars

While seven of the main actors featured in Space Cases hail from Canada (Kristian Ayre, Jewel Staite, Paige Heuser, Anik Matern, Cary Lawrence and Paul Boretski), the face of LA's Walter Jones will probably be the most familiar.

He previously played Zack, the Black Power Ranger. Another young actor from L.A., Rahi Azzizi, starred in A Little Princess and Stargate.

"We also have a lot of celebrity guests," advises Archambault. "One of the shows stars Mark Hamill. And an upcoming episode will star George Takai, Star Trek's Sulu. Mumy will also appear in one of the shows."

Ironically, Space Cases — a Canadian production — cannot be seen in Canada.

"We do not have a pick-up in Canada," admits Archambault.

"But that's not to say that we won't. It's a great series and we think it's got a lot of potential."Cinar thinks so highly of Space Cases that it made the show its featured series at the MIP-TV trade show in Cannes, France at the end of April.

With any luck, after the U.S. and France have had a gander, Canada will get a chance to see Space Cases too.

Digest looks for writers, poets

The editors of TransVersions are on the look out for a few good writers.

The Victoria, B.C.-based digest is interested in new, quality prose and poems, as well as colour and black and white artwork.

Writers' guidelines and other information can be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to: TransVersions, 1019 Colville Rd., Victoria, B.C. V9A 4P5.

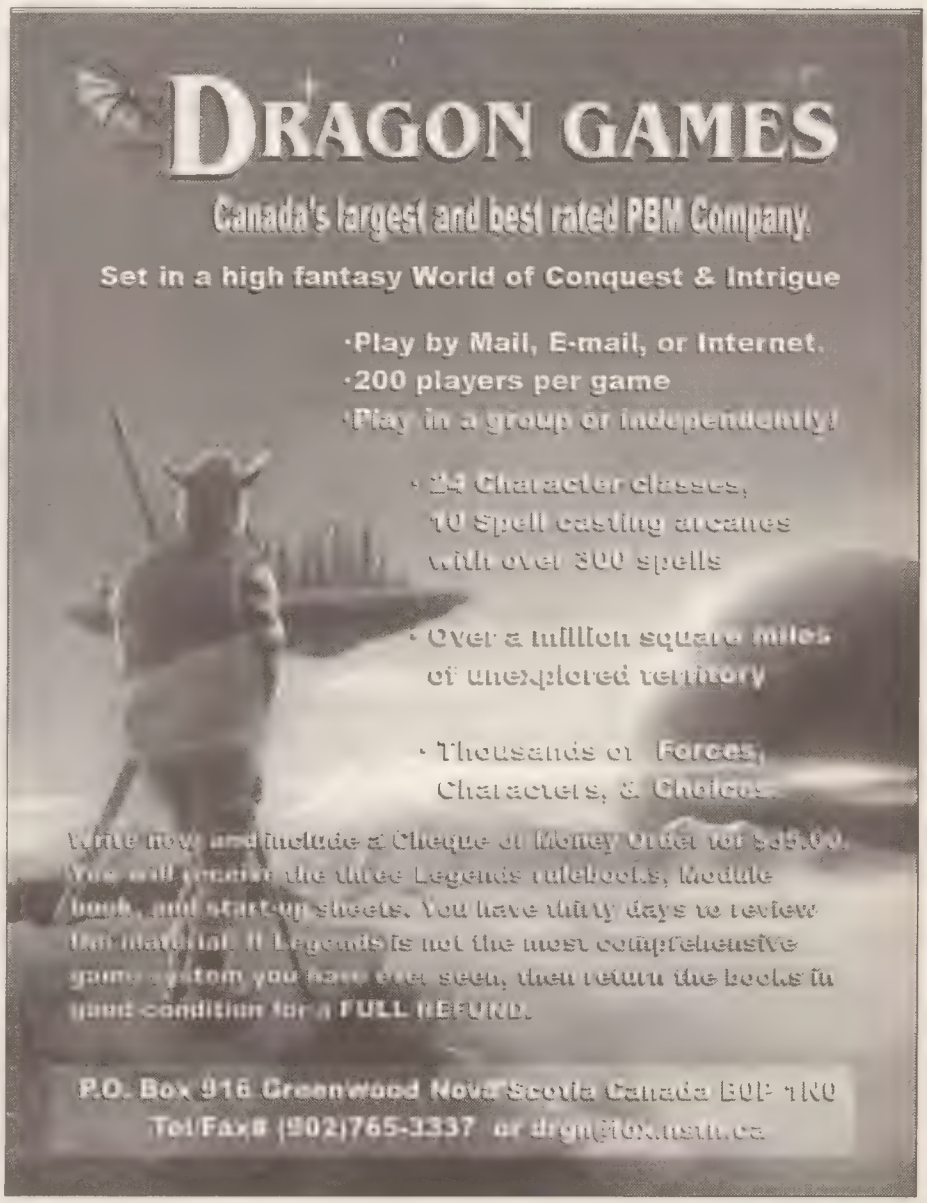
Could Canada be getting a sci-fi channel?

There are two proposals for science fiction channels before the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission.

The CRTC hearings are slated to begin during the week of May 6.

Short of supporting a specific proposal, fans may want to send a note to the CRTC informing them that a science fiction channel wouldn't be such a bad idea. Send you comments to:

CRTC
Central Building
1 Promenade du Portage
Hull, Quebec
K1A 0N2


DRAGON GAMES
Canada's largest and best rated PBM Company.
Set in a high fantasy World of Conquest & Intrigue
·Play by Mail, E-mail, or Internet.
·200 players per game
·Play in a group or independently!
· 24 Character classes,
10 Spell casting arcanes
with over 300 spells
· Over a million square miles
of unexplored territory
· Thousands of Forces,
Characters, & Choices
Write now and include a Cheque or Money Order for $25.00.
You will receive the three Legends rulebooks, module
book, and start-up sheets. You have thirty days to review
the material. If Legends is not the most comprehensive
game system you have ever seen, then return the books in
good condition for a FULL REFUND.
P.O. Box 916 Greenwood Nova Scotia Canada B0P 1N0
Tel/Fax# (902)765-3337 or drgn@fox.nstn.ca

In the future, becoming a woman can be deadly

THE COMING OUT PARTY

Text
By KEN BASARKE
Art
By RONN SUTTON

Judith Every tossed and turned, clutched tightly in the nightmare which had plagued her for the past three nights. She moaned torturously as her conscious mind tried to break the grip of the subconscious on her id. It failed and she was swept along, audience and participant, trapped in the whirlpool of the mindplay.

She sat at the breakfast table with her parents. The eerie room around her was haunting in its unfamiliar normality. The walls, the ceilings, the floor, even the furniture were composed of eco-fibres. The colloquial term, she suddenly remembered, was wood. alien and yet, so much like the plastic reality she saw everyday. Where? A dim memory enhanced the strangeness of her surroundings.

She glanced past her father into a hole in the wall — a winnow? No, a window! She rebelled at the green vista of trees surmounted by the clear blue arch of sky. Where were the dirty yellow clouds? A quick movement drew her attention. Something alive darted from branch to branch. She froze in disbelief.

The panic started as a small darkness inside her, growing in leaps and bounds. what is this place? Why am I here? The questions faded as the dream tightened its grip.

"Remember what we talked about Judith."

Her mother's words penetrated — a disturbing noise — but not the meaning.

"What?" she blurted, unthinking.

Her mother frowned. "Stop daydreaming Judith. This is your first social and I want you to be careful. The savages would like nothing better than to get their hands on a pretty young girl."

"Jane, maybe we should wait until next month," her father interrupted. "She's only a child."

"Nonsense. She's of marriageable age. How else is she going to find herself a husband?"

A pre-emptory knock at the door interrupted their argument.

Her husband pushed back his chair and rose. "Finish your breakfast Judith. That'll be Hansen." He strode over to open the door.

Judith craned her head, straining to see past his bulk.

The tousle-haired boy standing in the doorway was tall, taller than her father. An uncertain grin curved his lips. She couldn't help but notice how his chest strained the buttons of the plaid shirt.

"Good morning, sir. Is Judith ready to go?" As he spoke, his large hands twisted the felt hat they held through violent contortions.

"Morning Tim. Yes, she's just finishing breakfast." He peered over his shoulder. "Hurry up, dear." He faced Tim again, "She'll be right out."

Tim bobbed his head and backed away. "I'll wait for her at the wagon. Goodbye sir."

"Goodbye Tim." Closing the door, her father resumed his seat. "Seems like a good lad."

"Of course he is. Now stop embarrassing Judith. It's bad enough that the poor boy had to ride through the woods alone to pick her up. If the Hansens weren't so open-minded, they would have insisted that Judith take the risk."

"All right, all right. Just make sure she takes her gun." He glanced at Judith. "And remember, no foolishness."

Her mother raised her eyes skyward and rose. "Come along, Judith. Finish that cereal and scoot before he makes me come with you."

Judith obligingly spooned up the last of her breakfast and pushed her chair back from the table. Her father reached over, squeezing her hand as she rose. "Be careful!" he whispered.

"I will father." She kissed him lightly on the forehead and straightened, accepted the gunbelt her mother handed her. Clasping it around her waist, she strode to the door and threw it open.

It was a beautiful day. The sun shone brightly. The air was crystal clear and lightly scented with the soft smell of growing things. Taking a deep breath, she walked over to where Tim sat patiently on the wagon's seat.

"Hello, Tim," she muttered shyly.

Tim's rugged face broke into a wide smile. "Hullo, Judith. You look pretty today."

He extended his hand to help her up. Judith reached out tentatively. Their fingers touched and the world shattered into colored fragments.

Judith lay in the semi-darkness of her bedroom, drenched in perspiration and breathing shallowly. as always, the emotional explosion that ended the dream had left her drained of energy. She lay on her side and stared at the dim glow of the nightlight trying to find some sense in the recurring nightmare.

The dreams were different, but always about the same topics: boys and the outside. It was ridiculous! There were no boys in this complex and she couldn't care less about the outside, let alone want to go out there. And this one wasn't even historically accurate. They didn't have real guns in those days, only chemical catapults that projected tiny pieces of metal. Not even the Mals would use those pathetic things. She frowned into the darkness.

Maybe she was allergic to the food served in the adult dining room. Hard to believe. It had been three days. And it tasted so much better than the glop in

the juvenile cafeteria. Yet, if it wasn't the food, then what?

She gnawed fruitlessly at the problem for the better part of an hour, afraid to sleep because she knew what awaited her. At last, the room brightened automatically, indicating morning.

Blinking in the sudden glare, she dropped her feet to the floor and hit the query button on her sked-comp.

The flat screen lit up, showing her schedule for the day.

Only one item flashed red: the equipment check that wiped out her free period before supper. Grumbling under her breath, she made her way to the bathroom and then the kitchen.

She caught the tail end of a conversation and paused at the door.

". . . should have been weaned from the inhibitor slowly. She was tossed again last night." Her father's voice sounded worried.

"It's only been four days. You know it takes at least five."

Her mother broke off as she saw Judith, "Good morning, dear. How did you sleep?"

Judith frowned. Were they talking about me? "Fine," she answered cautiously.

As she reached for a piece of toast, she caught a glimpse of the clock. "Is that the time? I'm late."

Finishing the toast in two bites, she gulped her milk in a long swallow and grabbed her lap-comp off the computer. "See you later," she called, heading for the exit.

"Don't forget your equipment check, dear."

"I won't. Bye," she closed the door behind her.

❑❑❑

Judith carefully surveyed the dim, windowless room with increasing concern. The lights seemed to be failing. If that confounded monitor doesn't show up soon, she thought, I'll be standing in total darkness. She glanced at her chronometer and realized the free period's gossip session was probably already underway. No doubt that obnoxious Susan Little was talking about her behind her back. She stamped her foot in frustration but the boot's neoprene sole muffled the hard blow, so that only a thin plaintive squeak echoed in the vast area.

Her parents had authorized this full equipment check, but why now? why couldn't she get a full inspection along with the rest of the girls, as she usually did, in the bi-annual check?

Ever since her sixteenth birthday, they'd been acting strangely. One minute Father would be shouting for not securing her bedroom, and a moment later he would be praising her for passing grades in cybernetics. And Mother was no better. what about that nonsense a few minutes ago? The jewelry had been taken off her suit without even listening to her protests. God, she'd just die if any of her friends saw her like this. Everyone knew that the monitors ignored the fashion items during equipment checks. You'd think her programming had been loused up by a stray magnetic field.

Judith smiled thinly at the thought. She could see it now, in huge letters across the top of the complex's newsfax, "MOTHER REPLACED BY ERRANT CYBERBOT!" Wouldn't that give the girls a chuckle?

Her smile faded. Honestly, it just didn't make sense. What was the matter with them? Were they getting senile at thirty-six? The thought frightened her a little.

Frowning, Judith dug her toe into the resilient plasticrete floor. The action tightened the synthetic leather coverall across her shoulders, allowing the thick metal cups covering her breasts to sag forward. The dangling weight reminder her of the chain link shorts she had also been forced to wear over the suit today. She wiggled, settling the unfamiliar garment more comfortably on her hips, while wondering what had possessed her parents to give such useless birthday presents. What was wrong with the soft plastic breast-shields she had worn tucked into her jumpsuit everyday for the last five years?

"Short circuit," she hissed blasphemously and then bit her cheek in chagrin at her loss of control. She glanced around nervously to see if anyone had heard. The huge chamber, its walls almost hidden in the dim light, continued mocking her with its emptiness. She sank back into the morass of her thoughts.

Could it be because she was sixteen and could leave the complex? She didn't want to leave. At the end of the semester, she would be starting her new job in the organic biology research lab and have her own apartment. Everything she wanted was here.

She shook her head in annoyance. When would this nonsense end? She was fed up with all the refresher courses her parents had demanded she take recently. What a waste of time. The head weaponeer had reiterated his praise of her facility with a force-knife and shield while Sensei Uncle Lo Chin had reaffirmed her fourth-degree black belt in combat karate.

A sharp ping interrupted her thoughts.

Startled, she glanced at her environ-sensor. The unit was flashing a bright red which signaled a major air contamination. Despite her shock, she reacted quickly and efficiently with the drill she had practised all her life.

Expelling the air in her chest sharply, she drew the oxygen mask from its storage area on the suit and strapped it tightly over her mouth and nose. The gasping suction from her starved lungs activated the small, nodule-shaped air synthesizers into purring life. As the cool flow of gas entered her body, she struggled with the hood hidden inside the collar until it came free and drew it up over her close-cropped black hair. The sting of acrid pollution made her eyes water as she seated the hood's flexible goggles. A co-ordinated title of the gas mask and eye covering flushed the plastic lenses allowing clean air to sooth her irritated eyes.

For a moment Judith stood still, savoring the relief her protection brought, but she quickly realized there was more to be done. The complex had to be warned of the deadly leak.

In her minds eye, she saw the environment class videos showing the deadly clouds of sulphuric acid shrouding New York's streets.

If the breech in the complex's walls was not sealed quickly, the corrupted air would poison the whole system. At least a few careless residents would be caught without their masks, gasping for air while the acid seared their breathing passages. The grim thought galvanized her into a shambling run that stopped after a few unthinking paces. Where was the door?

Hints of real panic chilled her blood. The sulphur-laden fog continued to thicken, cutting off vision with a billowing yellow wall that roiled restlessly around her. Judith twisted from side to side trying to penetrate the haze, but it was no use. She had to do something! Urged into movement by the adrenalin's chemical insistence, she stumbled forward with outstretched arms.

"Help! Can anyone hear me?"

Even to herself, her voice sounded muffled and weak inside the gas mask. She listened for a response as she shuffled on, but only silence greeted her straining ears. Drawing a deep breath, she lifted the gas mask and shouted again,

"Mother! Father! Help!"

As she replaced the mask, a little of the contaminated air entered her lungs causing her to gag and cough. The paroxysm doubled her over and she dropped to one knee, trying to catch her breath. An eternity later, she could breathe again, although the rasping of air against her raw throat still sent pain stabbing through her body. As she gasped weakly, marshalling her strength for another try. the soft jingle of metal on metal made itself heard. A wave of relief washed through her.

"I'm over here!"

Only silence answered her tortured shout.

She stifled an emerging cough. Some hidden sense deep inside her warned of danger nearby. She rose silently to her feet, listening intently.

The metallic rattle was repeated faintly, somewhere to her right. She turned slowly, facing the sound while her eyes tried vainly to pierce the fog.

Unconsciously, her trained body slowly sank into a defensive posture. She crouched on the balls of her feet, her body's weight tilted slightly forward and the hands in a half-extended boxing position to shield her facial breathing apparatus. She waited, head turning slowly to catch any repetition of the sound. But the attack, when it came, was from the rear, not from the front. The deadly rush was almost inaudible.

Once again, the subtle anticipation that separates the professional from the amateur fighter guided her response. She whirled. Using the momentum of her turn, she deflected the force-knife aimed at her belly with her left hand. Her right hand clutched the extended knife arm and twisted it downward violently.

Caught off balance, her attacker tumbled head over heals, but not in the bone-jarring fall she intended. Forming into a ball, the dark suited figure turned the tumble into a smooth roll and disappeared into the fog leaving Judith alone once more.

angry and frightened, Judith faced the direction her attacker had taken, while she tried to order her jumbled thoughts.

What was going on here?

The brief glimpse of her female adversary had left two impressions that didn't make sense. First, the woman wore no shoulder flash on her suit. Everyone wore a flash that identified their complex and the level held in the hierarchy. And, second, the woman had been wearing infa-red goggles. The dark-sight gear was so uncomfortable, it was hard to believe anyone would wear them regularly.

Judith gnawed at the facts, trying to make some sense out of them. Suddenly they fell into place like a small child's puzzle. Mals!

This was an attack by the Mals on the complex. That's how the wall's atmospheric integrity had been breached and, of course, they would have prepared for the assault with dark-sight equipment.

With a lightening motion, Judith activated the shield on her left forearm generating a foot-wide translucent disk that would stop anything short of an industrial laser. She snatched the force-knife from her waist and triggered it. The eleven-inch energy blade blossomed into a pale blue radiance. She waved the knife from side to side like a torch, lighting the area around her.

Inside her, the fear melted away, leaving a curiously detached state rooted in a grim determination. Equal parts of hate and anger formed the core of the decision. The Mal would have to die! With that thought, the killing urge flowed through her body in a pleasant wave of anticipation that was hungrily absorbed like an addict's fix.

There were three of them. They emerged slowly from the sullen yellow fog, like wraiths materializing in a dark graveyard. all women and all armed with force-knives and shields.

Separating slightly, the threesome moved toward her. Judith shuffled slowly to the right to prevent the women from encircling her. As if reading her mind, the attacker on the left increased her pace to swing around behind her. Judith couldn't afford to let the manoeuvre succeed. She rushed the woman on the right Instead of shifting farther to the right so that Judith's back would be to her partner's, the woman stepped left so that her side would be protected by her fellow attacker. Instinctively sensing the weakness, Judith pushed her attack further to the open side causing the Mal to jostle her partner which distracted them both.

Judith surged forward. Feinting high, which drew the woman's shield up, she slashed low and hard. There was only a faint resistance as the force-knife slashed hilt-deep across the unprotected solar plexus. Without pausing, she lashed out with a round house karate kick that tumbled the woman into her partner. Both women went down. A geyser of sparks spewed into the air, but Judith didn't have time to wonder about its source.

Spinning around she intercepted the third woman's knife thrust at her kidneys with her shield while using her own force-knife to catch the attacker's arm just behind the wrist. The amputated hand, still clutching the knife loosely, fell to the floor. This time the coruscation of light was almost blinding.

Judith staggered back, blinking desperately to dispel the after-images from her watering eyes. as her vision cleared, she studied the sporadically thrashing body on the floor. Almost immediately, it grew still, but the severed arm still flashed intermittently from shorting wires which dangled out of the cut sleeve of the jumpsuit.

Cyberbots!

Judith clenched her teeth in anger. There was going to be hell to pay if the Mals had learned how to short the Asimov Law circuits in their positronic brains. That technology was one of the most closely-guarded secrets in the complex's hierarchy.

The sibilant whisper of shuffling feet cut through her shock. Although the cyberbot with the chest cut was inactive, its partner had risen and was advancing on her slowly.

She shuffled forward to meet it confidently. Knowing that it was a cyberbot gave her an edge. Of course it depended on the programming, but she was willing to bet that it didn't know that the rim of the shield was as deadly as a force-knife when used for cutting. That was the problem with machines, they were so literal-minded that one had to spend hours thinking of all the things that humans automatically understood.

"Come on, Transistor Head! Let's find out if you're as good as a human!" The cyberbot maintained its steady advance. Judith snorted. It was pointless to taunt a machine. Limited volition would hardly accommodate personal affronts.

As the figure came within reach, she slashed at its shoulder only to find the route blocked smoothly by its shield. She blocked the counter-attack just as efficiently and started to circle. The cyberbot matched her step for step. Her eyes narrowed.

Dropping her shield an inch, she left an opening to her throat. The cyberbot's knife jerked forward, arrowing for the unprotected area. Her own knife flashed up to deflect the creature's weapon

and then stabbed at its face. While the cyberbot intercepted her knife with its shield, she slashed at its extended knife hand with the edge of her own shield. The intended target jerked back and then forward like lightning, knocking her shield aside and plunging toward her chest. The impact sent pain shooting through her body. Desperately, she disengaged by jumping back.

Her mouth worked convulsively, trying to dampen a suddenly dry tongue. She glanced down at the tear in her jumpsuit over one breast and the bright gleam of the metal cup that protected it. If she had been wearing her usual plastic shields or the thrust had been a few inches to either side, she would have been skewered. She shuttered involuntarily. A stealthy movement drew her attention back to the cyberbot.

It was advancing again. She clenched her teeth and crouched. This time she wouldn't be so carelessly self-assured. She studied her lethal opponent for a few seconds before identifying the inherent weakness. Composed of circuits, hydraulic tubing and gears, the creature was extremely dense and heavy. Although the structure gave it strength and speed, it also made it critical that the machine maintain its balance. without early correction, its mass would prohibit a change in direction once a false step was taken. The key to success lay in disrupting that balance.

She watched and waited.

The cyberbot shifted its weight to take a step and Judith moved. Her knife slashed at its eyes and as the shield went up, her right foot lashed out in a hard kick against its leg. Already off balance, the cyberbot's weight shifted too far the other way and it began to fall. As its arms dropped to cushion the body, Judith moved in. Her knife came down on the back of the cyberbot's neck and continued through. Totally severed, the head fell to the floor. It was joined by the body an instant later. Sparks danced thickly over the separated joints.

Gasping for breath, Judith straightened. As she looked around warily, the room's lights resumed full intensity. She blinked in the bright glare. A heavy fan started up and the corrosive yellow fog thinned quickly, revealing an empty room. Her eyes searched the walls, but there was no sign of a breach. A dark suspicion formed in her mind as she walked to the door. Here parents were waiting outside.

A few minutes later, sitting in one of the cafeteria's private cubicles with her parents, she took another sip of the hot vita-drink. It tasted wonderful. not like the stuff served in the dorm which left a foul aftertaste in the mouth. As she drank, she studied her parents covertly. They were still wearing the inane grins usually reserved for those moments when she did exceptionally well in her classes. Setting the drink down, she finally asked the question burning in her mind.

"Why?"

For a moment, no one spoke. Her father and mother exchanged glances, the grins disappearing to be replaced by a vague look of guilt. Watching them closely, Judith was startled to discover her father was blushing. Her mother broke the strained silence.

"First let me say that I"m very proud of you, Judith. No one in our family has ever failed their test and our family history goes back five generations."

Her mother paused, gazing fondly at her.

Judith frowned. "I don't understand."

"No, of course you don't. Well, there were a few things left out of our history class that you've earned the right to know. You remember studying the split between the technology workers and the illiterate workers in the 21st century?"

Judith nodded. "That's when these complexes were built to protect us from the gangs of criminals who roamed the streets."

"Yes that's right, but it wasn't just the gangs who stayed outside. At the time, people made a choice. Some chose the road to a simpler life, without the increased benefits that scientific advances promised. Others, like us, put their faith and trust in technology. That's why we built these self-sufficient complexes."

Judith frowned. "I understand, but what does that have to do with . . ."

"I'm coming to that. Do you remember the food contamination scare of 2019 associated with the radiation sterilization of the hydroponic vegetables?"

"Yes, I do."

"Your history text simply states that we stopped using the radiation approach and left it at that. Unfortunately, that's not entirely the truth."

Her mother's hand snaked out and clasped her husband's so tightly that the knuckles were pale blobs under the skin.

"The consequences were much, much worse than simple food poisoning. Some ten years later, we discovered the ribonucleic acid in the poisoned food had been mutated by the radiation. Further testing revealed the mutated RNA had attacked our body's DNA. Specifically, it destroyed the amino acid 'serine.' The deletion of serine from our DNA's polypeptide chain had a small but significant impact."

She paused to swallow convulsively.

"We found that no male in the complex could father male children. The other complexes report the same situation. The stories you've been told of boys in the other complexes are lies and that's why the children's cafeteria serves food laced with the inhibitor drug. It's intended to suppress the normal reproductive urge. The bad dreams you've been having are due to withdrawal stress since you now eat in the adult dining room. We've had to take these drastic measures because with children of only one sex, our culture is doomed. You must keep this information to yourself. Only the adults are permitted to know the truth."

A horrible sense of unreality gripped Judith. As she listened, she felt as if she were trapped in a waking version of one of her recent nightmares.

"We tried to get the Mals, ah, outside people to move in to help us start a new generation, but they refused to have anything to do with us."

She sighed sadly, "I guess you can't blame them. During those first years, safe and secure in our sealed complexes, we gave nothought to the toxic waste and pollution our factories were putting into the outside air and water. The people outside have to live in it and they hate us for it. we cleaned up the emissions years ago, but so far there's been little change."

Her husband laid an encouraging hand on her shoulder. She shared a smile with him before continuing.

"The only way we can survive is to sneak outside and live among the Mals while we court our husbands. Once we're mated, we tell them the truth and hope they'll join us inside the complex. If they won't, we stay outside. Your father agreed to come in, as my father did and your future husband hopefully will. Not all families are so lucky. Many children leave and never return."

Judith stared at her mother in shock.

"There's no hope?"

"So far, the damaged DNA has proved dominant. Maybe your children . . . "

Her mother refused to meet her eyes, "But now, let's join the others in the ballroom."

She rose, her eyes commiserating as she gave Judith what every child foolishly yearns to have.

"You're an adult now and you only have one coming out party in your life." ☆

See what happens when the wrong seeds are planted

In Your Dreams

Text
By STEPHANIE BEDWELL-GRIME
Art
By JOHN PLATT

"Holding pattern!" the head controller barked. Right away I knew it was going to be a bad night at work. He leaned over my shoulder to look through the control tower window at the spokes of yellow lights that glowed within the fog. A moment ago those lights had been steadily receding blips on our screens. Now they were frozen, like flies in amber.

"What in heaven's going on out there?"

He glanced at the flight plan, glowered out the window, then back at the controllers who sat at regular intervals about the round, glass, tower. "Which of you fools sent 006 to Toronto?"

A stony silence descended upon the room. I fought the cyclone of terror working its way up my spine and cleared my throat.

"I did . . . Sir."

"It wasn't supposed to go to Toronto," the head controller thundered. "It was bound for Pittsburgh!"

Desperate to launch my own defense, I jabbed my finger at the heap of accordion-folded computer paper on my desk. "Toronto, it says here."

"Moron!" he roared. "That's last night's flight plan."

In horror, I stared at the date. September fifth. I glanced at the quartz watch on my wrist. The traitorous thing read, September sixth.

"That was a Class One you just sent to the wrong city!"

Mystery solved, I bore the full brunt of his temper. "Thanks to you we now have a Code Z emergency on our hands!"

I stared out the window, earnestly wishing I could reach out and yank that glowing sphere back. But the dream had been deployed. There was only one thing to do.

Go after it.

❑❑❑

Minutes later I was crammed into a stuffy, one-man retrieval pod. Radar told us the recipient was not yet in REM sleep. Still time then.

The hatch slammed shut, bottling me inside. Breath was knocked from my throat as the craft plunged into the clouds. I held on to my stomach to ensure it stayed put during the seconds of weightlessness. Then the unforgiving hand of gravity yanked me irretrievably earthward.

The pod touched down on a low roof in the city's core.

Three a.m., ten minutes remaining.

With the threat of unemployment ringing in my ears, I punched up the schematics on the pod's console. The receptor lived in Unit 304. I grabbed my tool belt and tore across the gravel roof.

According to the manual, dream retrieval was a straightforward procedure. Locate the recipient before they fell into REM. Point the converger between their eyes and press the red button. Simple enough, sure. But, I was a novice, and I still had an apartment to break in to.

As if the night couldn't get any worse, this particular recipient was documented in the Big Book as Code ZZ, in other words — a nutcase. One of those psychopath's we only sent pleasant dreams of sunlit meadows. Who knew what a nightmare could cause him to do.

When I messed up, I did a bang up job of it.

Luckily, the door to the roof wasn't locked. Ten minutes wasn't enough time to break through two doors, retrieve a dream and make it back to the pod before the timer whisked it back to control.

I ignored the elevator and took the stairs, two, three at a time, as fast as I could move my nervous legs.

His door was beside the stairwell, which reduced my risk of being caught during the break-in. At least something was going right.

Glowing red numbers from the chronometer on the dream converger read, five minutes. I unclipped the interrupter from my belt. Mechanical lock, luckily. I didn't have time to break through a complicated alarm system.

With trembling fingers, I matched up the shape of the keyhole as best I could and pressed the button. The interrupter glowed as the lock grew hot, then . . .

Nothing.

Cursing under my breath, I reprogrammed the interrupter and listened intently for the sound of the dead-bolt moving.

For a second I was sure I was doomed, then I heard a loud click, and the door swung smoothly inward.

Two minutes.

I snatched up the converger and was about to barrel across the threshold, when a tiny red glow caught my eyes.

It didn't take long to locate the source. The paranoid fool had an alarm system. Not exactly high-tech. One of those beam things plugged straight into the outlet below.

Shaking my head, I reached under the beam and pulled out the plug. I stepped into his front hall, hoping the bedroom wasn't far.

One minute.

With two leaps, I'd crossed the living room, and stopped dead in my tracks.

Snarling out of the bedroom lumbered a ferocious-looking pit bull.

Now really, what kind of pet did I expect a psychopath to have?

Jaws of gleaming white leapt for my throat. Desperately short of options, I raised the only weapon I had and drenched the bulldog in the red beam of the converger.

I hadn't worked on an animal since college. Hoping I still remembered how, I spun the dial and assembled a long, rutting dream of a bitch in heat.

He fell to the floor with a dull thud and whimper.

The chrono clicked. Another second disappearing. I raced into the hall. Four identical doors greeted me in uniform silence.

I lunged for the first door and hauled it open. A stack of towels and a roll of toilet paper fell on my head. The next door could only be the washroom, so I skipped that and tugged on the third. There was a bed inside; it was empty. I scanned the hallway.

One more door.

The chronometer clicked over to zero, I opened the last door.

In the dim light I could see him lying diagonally across the bed, the covers tossed in a heap on the floor. I vaulted for the bedside, pointed the converger, and . . .

Beneath closed lids, his eyes were already moving back and forth.

Never, read the manual, retrieve a dream if the recipient is already in REM sleep.

What can I say? My career was on the line. I was sure it was no more than a second after the chrono stopped.

I pressed the red button. The recipient's face glowed red, then green, then blue. He moaned, I panicked.

If I couldn't retrieve the dream completely, I reasoned, perhaps I could make him forget. I spun the dial on the converger. Number 0010 — basic naked in public insecurity dream, 0062 — falling nightmare with landing, 0920 — monster under the bed and can't scream. I watched the tiny, yellow globules form and disappear into his forehead.

In the livingroom, I heard the pit bull stir.

I raced for the front door. It swung shut, cutting off a yelp and an aborted bark, as the pit bull hit the wall beside it.

"Next time," I promised the snarling mutt, "it's the dog catcher dream for you!"

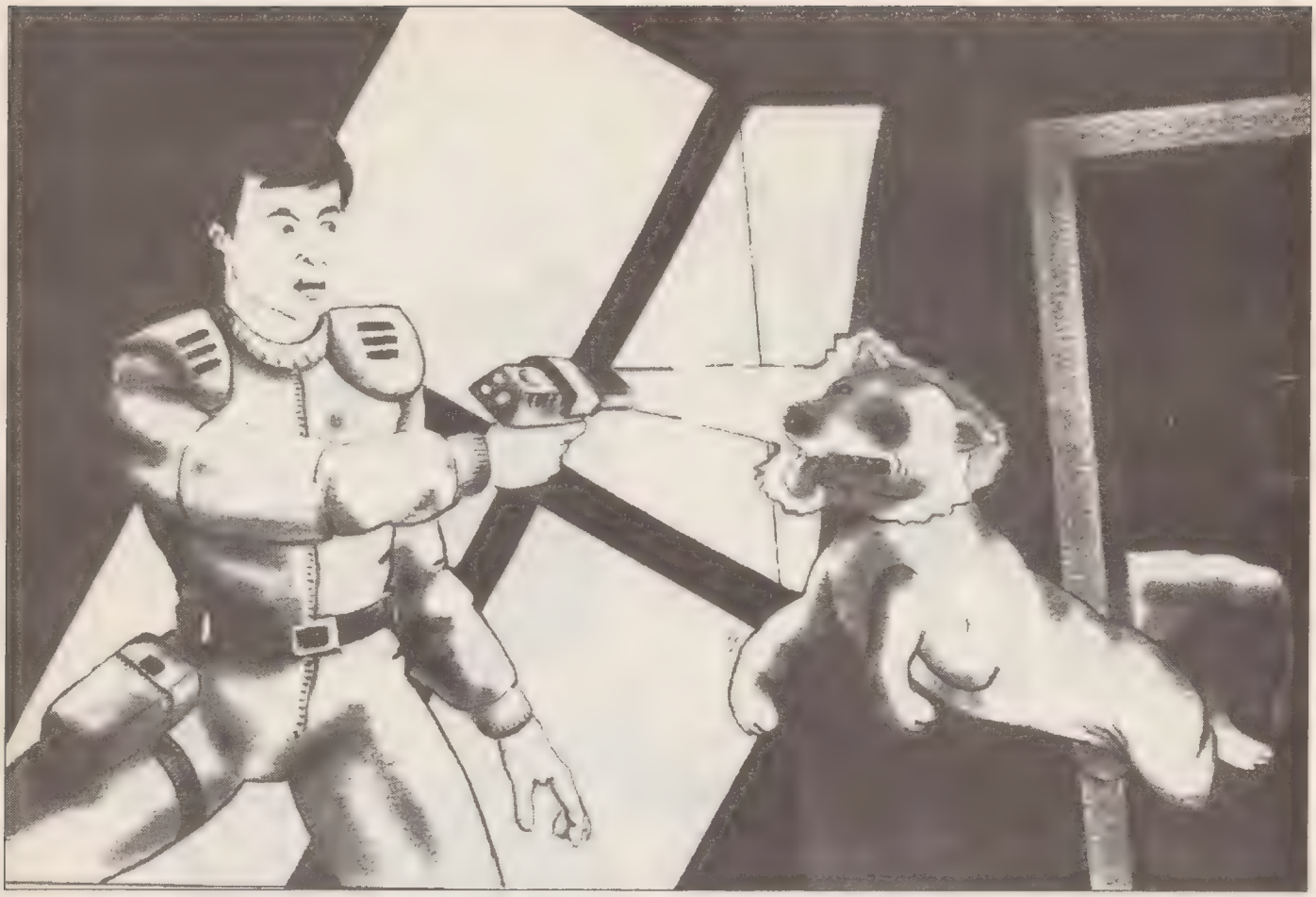
Bracing myself on the railing, I heaved myself up the stairs. My feet barely touched the last flight as I threw myself against the door to the roof. To find it locked.

In disbelief, I looked down at the handle. It locked from the inside.

As I said, screwing up is something at which I excel.

Blaspheming every god I could think of, I reached for the interrupter. The builder had really splurged on this lock. He saved the cheap ones for the doors to people's units.

Beneath the door, I could see a yellow glow. The pod was firing up its engines to return to control. This was earth I



reminded myself. Wonderful earth where gravity caused me to weigh three times my normal weight and the razor-sharp teeth of a pit bull were very real indeed.

Unemployed was one thing, stranded on Earth quite another. Giving up on technology, I slammed my shoulder against the door. The damned thing held just fine.

I backed up, and with raw desperation, I leaned on the railing and threw a double booted kick against it. The door crashed outward.

Gathering up the converger, I dove for the pod.

I fell through the hatch, feeling those first tingling seconds of increased G, even as I hit the deck. Groping for my harness, I glanced for the first time at the dial on the converger.

It read: one dream, partially retrieved, three deployed.

❑❑❑

They were waiting for me in the conference room when I arrived back in control, the head controller, the captain, even the admiral, all waiting for my debriefing.

"So?" the head controller demanded. "Were you successful?"

I didn't know how to answer him. Nervously, I set the converger on the table. "More or less . . .Sir."

"More or less?" the head controller chortled, his face darkening from pink to maroon. I thought he might explode. I envisioned the lot of us running about the conference room picking up the pieces, an ear here, an eye there.

"More or less!" he thundered, slamming his fist on the table. He snatched the converger from my hands.

"Give me that." He read the gauge. I watched his face fade to gray. "You stupid fool," he whispered, then turned to the others.

"Gentlemen, we have an emergency, Code X."

The room erupted with activity. In seconds, they'd patched in a feed.

With eerie deja vu, I followed the screen back into the apartment I'd so recently left.

My trail was sketched out in a series of skewed rugs, overturned chairs and opened doors. The pit bull sat whining as his master drank a cup of steaming coffee. The recipient leaned over and splashed some coffee into the dogs bowl. Straightening, he opened the paper.

"Spike," he said watching the bulldog lap up his discarded caffeine. "Tomorrow's the Summit. The leaders of seven industrialized nations will be driving right past here. I think I'll go buy some bullets."

❑❑❑

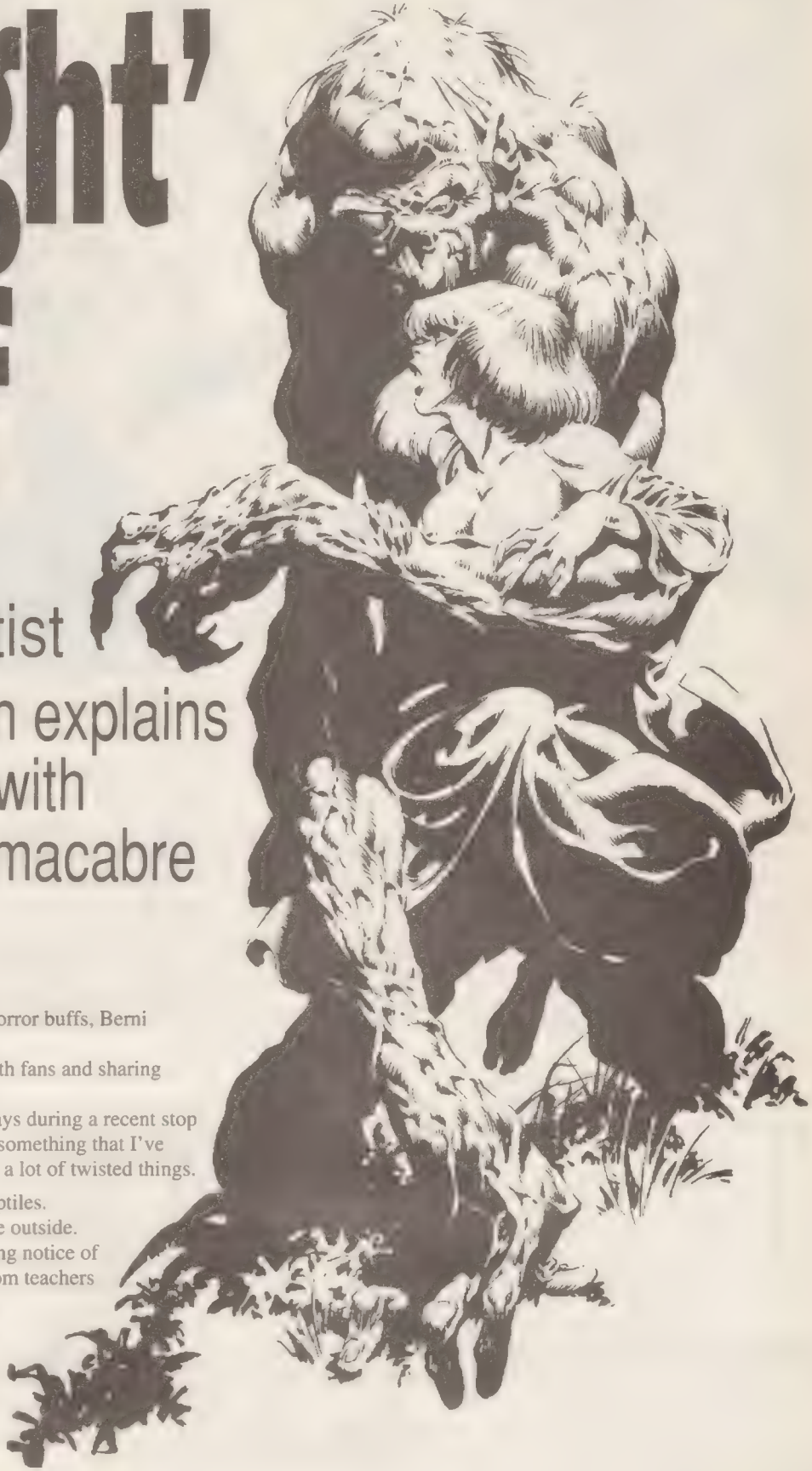
These days I don't do much except sleep late and read the want ads. I hear they need someone in the Day Dreams Department, but I don't know. Perhaps it's time for a change in career.

And the psycho at the center of the whole commotion? Turns out he wasn't much of a marksman. Especially when, at the moment of aiming he imagined he'd forgotten to don his skivvies. Right now he's in an institution for the criminally insane. They give him pills so he won't dream.

His intended target?

Well, I can't name names, but I heard the dignitary escaped without a scratch. I also hear, he's not sleeping well these days.☆

'Wright' stuff



Legendary artist Berni Wrightson explains his fascination with horror and the macabre

By
JAMES ARMSTRONG

To most comic book fans, especially horror buffs, Berni Wrightson has attained demi-god status.

The personable artist enjoys talking with fans and sharing stories about his experiences in the field.

"I don't remember not drawing," he says during a recent stop at Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto. "It was something that I've always done. But when I was young, I did a lot of twisted things.

"I collected things, mostly bugs and reptiles. Things that people always told me to leave outside. But, I don't remember a lot of people taking notice of my drawings when I was young, Aside from teachers who would catch me drawing something during their classes when I was supposed to be listening."

Wrightson spent most of his life in the

Although most fans know Wrightson from his work on the Swamp Thing, his art work touches many areas in the horror genre.

Midwest United States. He never lost his love of painting and drawing as he moved from place to place.

One of his earliest published works appeared in D.C. Comic's House of Mystery and featured a creature that would later propel Wrightson to celebrity status.

The Swamp Thing first appeared in House of Mystery number 195. Later, Wrightson and writer Len Wein reworked the character into the creature readers know today.

"The Swamp Thing is something I think I'll always enjoy remembering, even though the character has gone through some poor reconstructions over the years.

"I have a great interest in horror and suspense. It's not just work to me, it's my hobby and I enjoy reading about it and watching those types of movies.

"I love Boris Karloff movies, like Frankenstein and the Bride of Frankenstein — anything Frankenstein. All the old Bela Lugosi films, Vincent Price stuff, Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee. I love it all."

"I love Boris Karloff movies, like Frankenstein and the Bride of Frankenstein — anything Frankenstein"

Wrightson's illustrated novel of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein was released in 1983. The 192-page trade paperback features an unedited version of the novel supported by more than 40 pieces of artwork by Wrightson. Many of these pieces are considered masterpieces in the comic art world.

Wrightson's recurring labour of love is a project entitled "Captain Sternn."

COMIC CAVE
Comics & Gaming Cards
mail order service available
769 St. Mary's Road
Winnipeg, MB., R2M 3N8
(204) 254-5782

7 STAR COMIC WORLD
Comics Silver Age to present
posters and games
Try our mail order service
1-800-640-9538
(705) 566-9948

First appearing in an issue of Heavy Metal magazine in 1980, Captain Sternn has appeared and disappeared since then. "I remember when I first came up with the idea for Captain Sternn. It was sometime after seeing Star Wars when I realized that there was a market for a space-opera-type characters and storylines," Wrightson recalls. "I always like the Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers strips, so I decided to do a parody of that genre."

Captain Sternn also marked a transition in Wrightson from artist to creator and writer.

"In 1980, the Captain Sternn character was almost tailor-made for Heavy Metal. But I felt he was too much of an asshole and, in the end, would not reach the audience due to his unlikeable disposition.

"In the second Captain Sternn story (Interstellar Toybox , Dreadstar 1983), I lightened his character by everyone hearing about how awful he was, but not actually seeing the deed. This put a more acceptable history around Sternn and gave him an almost comical edge.

"This was more like I wanted him and when the people from Heavy Metal the movie, asked me to consult for their Sternn segment, that's what they went with."

Since Captain Sternn is now Wrightson's most recognized work, the question comes, "where did the seed for the character originate?"

"Easy," Wrightson answers. "James Garner on the Rockford Files.

"If you look at Sternn's face, you'll see Jim Rockford there. Sternn's a caricature. And the other characters, I don't know where they came from. But the dinosaurs are there for a reason. I wanted to draw dinosaurs and this was before Jurassic Park."

Wrightson's flexibility in the comic book industry is well-recognized. But he insists that it's a reputation that he achieved by accident. Wrightson credits other artists, such as Jim Starlin, for his growth.

"Jim has definitely had the biggest influence

Contuinued on Page 31

Wrightson's affinity for Frankenstein is obvious in the 1982 artwork (left) Wrightson says that he has long been a fan of the monster movies featuring Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi.

It would have helped to have book sooner

Review

Having the companion along is mandatory for anyone venturing into the confusing realm of Terry Pratchett's Discworld

You know how you always think of the best joke for the staff Christmas party the day after?

So it was with receiving the Discworld Companion (Random House) after struggling through Terry Pratchett's Soul Music: A Discworld Novel.

Discworld Companion is a guide to Pratchett's unique world which will likely be enjoyed by his legion of fans as well as newcomers to the series.

Guides and indexes to fantasy worlds are a favourite of mine even when the novels aren't. This particular "companion' would have been invaluable with Soul Music since I was a Discworld neophyte. In fact, the secondary language on the cover is: An invaluable guide for the discerning Discworld traveller.

Pratchett had the help of Stephen Briggs while compiling the Companion. Briggs was a fan of the series and has also created the Streets of Ankh-Morpork, a map of Discworld's oldest city.

In my earlier review, I mentioned I was unsure exactly what the makeup of Discworld was, whether it involved several planes of existence or dimensions or even who its inhabitants were.

Fans of the series will no doubt tell you it is a flat world being carried on the back of a turtle. An element of mythology Pratchett has seen more than one version of and incorporated it into its series.

The star turtle's name is the Great A'Tuin and it is 10,000-miles long. Its sex is unknown.

The definition of Discworld continues on several columns of text which may explain why Pratchett does not want to have to reiterate the information in each novel.

But having the knowledge beforehand would have heightened my enjoyment of Pratchett's work greatly.

It was also surprising to look up some characters from Soul Music and find that it is the only novel they appear in. Susan, the granddaughter of Death, and sometime stand-in, was particularly puzzling. From the text, I had assumed she was a recurring character.

There are likely those out there telling me I should simply read the earlier 16 or so Discworld novels from its inception onward, so my review could be much more informed, but as fantasy and sci-fi lovers know there are far too many novels and nowhere near enough time or money.

For those considering dabbling into Discworld, I heartily recommend the Companion to guide your way through.

And in fact for those who simply wish to find out a bit more about both the author and other areas Discworld is taking by storm (music, computer games etc.) the Companion is quite enjoyable.

— BRIAN BELFRY

From Page 30

on my work. We worked very closely together on Batman, and he shared his techniques in story writing.

"Before I met Jim, I would write my story, all my ideas and type out a full script. It worked out great for me, unless I had to changes something. Then it was a mess of paper. Jim showed me how to straighten out my ideas and cut down on the paperwork by simply writing out each idea or scene on index cards.

"This technique is a lot like storyboarding in the movies. It works great because now I can have all my ideas down and be able to rearrange them before they go down in scripted format.

"It's a big time saver and no good ideas are ever lost . . . thrown out maybe, but never lost."

Starlin aside, Wrightson counts Joe Jusko and Bill Sienkiewicz as his favorite artists working in the field — they also happened to be working next to him at the time of the interview.

GALAXY ENTERPRISES

New from Polydata

The 1:6-Luke Skywalker pre-painted vinyl kit

This great Canadian kit is offered at the introductory price of

$30 plus $6 postage and handling (taxes included)

Send cheque or money order to:
Galaxy Enterprises
P.O. Box 340
Grimsby, Ont., L3M 4H8

1996 colour catalogue $4
To order call 1-800-643-4407

Earlier version deserves classic label

By
EMRU TOWNSEND

Cult classic.

The term evokes images of midnight screenings at art theatres crammed with college students. Sadly, the image doesn't apply to Rock & Rule, though it deserves the label.

In the late 1970's and early 1980's, the Toronto-based Nelvana studio had garnered some success with their TV animation specials, such as Rome-0 and Julie and The Devil and Daniel Mouse.

They then decided to make the leap into creating their first feature.

This was a bold move, for a number of reasons. First of all, the early 1980's was a bad time for feature animation in general.

Second, the movie stepped outside of many conventions.

At the time, there were two distinct camps for features: those for kids and those for adults.

Rock & Rule was most definitely not for young children, but except for some minor swearing and a nipple shot here and there, it didn't tip into the sex/violence excesses of, say, Heavy Metal.

The movie's main characters were animals, but were not the young, fuzzy animals of many a Disney feature; rather, they were post-apocalypse, anthropomorphic animals who were very humanlike not only in appearance, but in their desires.

The movie's songs were far from Disneyesque; they were contemporary pop and rock, performed by Cheap Trick, Iggy Pop, Lou Reed, Debbie Harry, as well as Earth, Wind and Fire.

The premise behind Rock & Rule goes like this: Mok, an aging rock superstar, finds that his popularity is waning.

Always one to think big, he plans to summon a demon from another dimension, and bind it to his will. To do this, he needs a specific voice to sing a specific sequence of notes to open the doorway to said dimension. He manages to find Angel, who is in a struggling band along with her friends Omar, Dizzy, and Stretch.

When Mok fails to convince Angel to join him on his tour, he resorts to outright kidnapping. Her friends, of course, try to get her back and she tries to thwart things from her end.

Rock & Rule's two best features are its production values and its characters. Nelvana didn't hold back in scenes that needed punch, and the editing and sound mixes during these scenes are nothing short of spectacular. But the glue that holds everything together is the consistency and depth of the characters.

Like the best screen villains, Mok is charismatic and self-assured, while being vain and egomaniacal. A mix of Iggy Pop and David Bowie, he is probably one of the best contemporary animated villains because he is completely unapologetic. Don Francks's performance as Mok's voice is nothing short of inspired, as is the work done by Mok's character animators.

Angel is the strongest female character to ever grace animated film (Hayao Miyazaki's Nausica notwithstanding), and should really be considered the star of Rock & Rule, second only to Mok.

Self-assured and competent, she never fails to stand up for herself or her friends, with words or actions. A quick and decisive thinker, she never waits for the guys to save her, nor does she fade into the background when they do arrive.

Films, animated or live-action, need more women like Angel.

Unfortunately, Rock & Rule didn't fare too well at the box office, and quickly faded from the silver screen.

Shortly thereafter, for reasons still unclear, a second cut was made of the film. Some voices were recast, some scenes were added, others removed, and still others re-edited. Generally, the movie is the same, though some scenes lost their punch due to the changes in editing.

Finding plain Rock & Rule on video is a bit of a challenge; the CBC aired the original cut two or three times in the late 1980's, and the re-edit has aired on Cinemax repeatedly since.

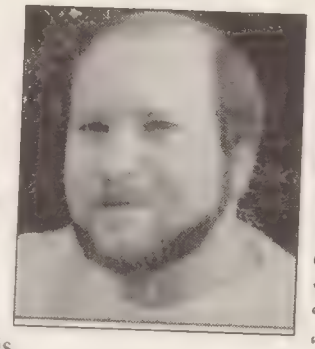
MGM/UA released the re-edit on videocassette and laserdisc in 1984, but these are scarce these days.

However, Nelvana is currently trying to sell the movie to distributors for a re-release; maybe Rock & Rule plain will finally get the recognition it deserves.

❑ **Emru Townsend is editor of fps: The Magazine of Animation on Film and Video. He can be reached either via Parsec or at emru@cam.org or switch@bix.com. His column appears in each issue of Parsec.**

Anderson has universe to himself

By
CHRIS KREJLGAARD



If there is a Yoda — a wise and respected figure — in Star Wars literature, then best selling author Kevin J. Anderson would be it. Or at least as close as they come.

In a few years, Anderson has authored such books as the Jedi Academy Trilogy and Deathsaber, as well as served as editor for Tales From the Mos Eisley Cantina and Tales From Jabba's Palace and written a six-issue series based for Dark Horse Comic. He has also published his first novel based on the X-Files

But what gets overshadowed by the success of Anderson's work in Star Wars is the fact that he has had 10 books published since becoming a science fiction author.

Among his other works are the Trinity Paradox, Assemblers of Infinity and Climbing Olympus. Assemblers of Infinity, co-written with Doug Beason, was nominated for a Nebula Award in 1993.

Unlike other writers who stare at computer screens or typewriter paper all day, Anderson dictates his thoughts for books into a tape recorder. as he hikes around his Northern California home. The tapes are transcribed and the draft is reworked later.

Even though his talents as a writer in the Star Wars universe are unquestionable, Anderson says that his foray into editing has provided him with a new challenge.

"Editing is less of a creative challenge than it is an organizational challenge. It was a great deal of work, but I found it creatively satisfying," he said of his latest anthology, Tales From Jabba's Palace. Part of the challenge was to select the proper authors to convey the tales that make up what Anderson calls a "round-robin anthology."

"I picked professionals who would do the material justice and I intentionally picked little-known authors to give them a break in the business."

Among the authors whose work is included in the book are Timothy Zahn and Canadians Garfield and Judith-Reeves Stevens. The end result is an interesting mix of styles and stories of the characters who were with Jabba as he neared the end of his criminal life in the Return of the Jedi.

Novel shows Anderson's range

In Blindfold (Warner Books), Kevin J. Anderson presents a tale of the intrigue and deception that is threatening the future of Atlas — an outpost of colonists from Earth.

Decades earlier, these colonists began settling the planet. Atlas was suitable for habitation — but not by much. The planet required sacrifices and hard work to make it a place that can be called home. Far from the influences of Earth (large amounts of time were spent in sleep chambers during the voyage), Atlas developed its own society and justice system. The justice system was left in the hands of the Guild of Truthsayers.

The Truthsayers were raised from embryos for this one task. They were required to take regular dosages of a drug to provide them with infallible telepathic ability. The Truthsayers at the top of their hierarchy would read the minds of the accused and discern whether or not they were guilty. The Truthsayers were considered infallible.

This is until Kalliana sentences an innocent man to exile in the orbiting prison.

This sets a number of events in motion. What has made the infallible system suddenly fallible — a circumstance that could have a resounding effect on the entire planet?

Kalliana must find out how and where the veritas is being altered, as well as free the man she wrongly convicted.

The search for the answer to this all-consuming question uncovers details of a plot that, if it succeeds, could put control of Atlas in the hands of one man.

Franz Dokken is the man behind the machinations that have set various landowners against each other and have resulted in the disappearance of a number of individuals who have stood in his way.

In Dokken, Anderson presents a villain who readers can easily identify with. Dokken would be well at home in the boardrooms, backrooms or offices of power in the real world.

It is in the persons of Dokken and the enigmatic Eli Strone that Anderson shines in Blindfold.

His characterization of both is flawless and the shadings that he provides the character with makes Dokken one of the memorable figures in recent science fiction, as is his final fate — a fate that the two characters both play a role.

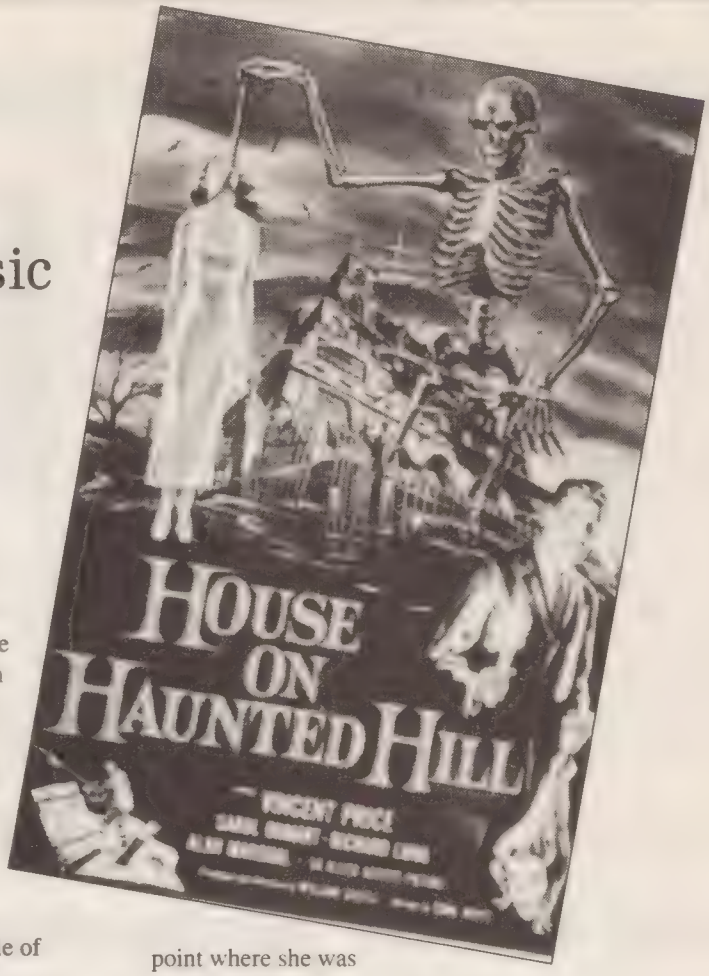
Anderson gives readers a story so compelling that they cannot wait to see what lies ahead.

Daydreams & Nightmares
The Bookstore for Your Imagination
Fantasy * SF * Myths * Legends * Horror
Children * Teens * Adults
Mail Order Service
800 Broadview Ave., Toronto, Ont., M4K 2P7
Hours: 12-7 Tue, Wed, 12-8 Thu, Fri, 10-6 Sat, 12-5 Sun
(416) 469-5354

When murder becomes fun

William Castle's classic horror tale features Vincent Price at his devious best

By
CHRIS KREJLGAARD



During the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s, one of the sure-fire ways to put together a good horror film was to cast Vincent Price in it.

Major role or minor role, it didn't make any difference. Just as long as you had Vincent.

House on Haunted Hill (1958) is one of the films that proves this theory.

It is a fine horror film from an age when axe-wielding maniacs and machete-swinging lunatics were nowhere to be seen.

This William Castle classic featured Price in the role of Frederick Loren.

Loren is a millionaire who has offered five strangers $10,000 if they stay the night in a house he has rented. They're invited for a haunted house party.

Among the five are: test pilot Lance (ed. note: yeah find me a test pilot whose name isn't *Lance*) Schroeder (Richard Long), pyschiatrist Dr. David Trent (Alan Marshall), typist Nora Manning (Carolyn Craig) and a drunk played by Elisha Cooke.

Cooke's character owns the house in which the party takes place. The house has a storied past. The odd-looking structure was the scene of seven grisly murders — including Cooke's brother. The heads of two of the victims were never found.

Cooke's character serves as a quasi-narrator for the movie. He sets up the plot with a quick introduction before the title even appears on the screen. At the end of the movie, he leaves the door open for future stories in the house. During the course of the movie, he also provides a sense of urgency and fear as he constantly tells the other party-goers about the ghosts and their state of restlessness.

His drunken warnings also play a role in the movie's sub plot.

Even though Loren selected the five strangers for the evening, the party was his wife, Annabelle's idea.

She and her lover, Dr. Trent, planned to scare Manning to the point where she was convinced that Loren was trying to kill her and kills him instead.

It was a plan that almost worked to perfection.

At the climax of the movie, a petrified Manning is in the house's cellar searching for a missing Lance. Loren comes up behind her. She turns and, convinced he is about to attack, shoots him. He falls and she runs screaming from the room (she does this a great deal throughout the movie).

After she leaves, Dr. Trent comes out of his hiding place, drags Loren over to a vat of acid and is about to throw him into the vat when the lights go out. The audience can hear a struggle, a scream and then a splash.

Annabelle later enters the cellar looking for her lover. Suddenly the lights dim and a skeleton emerges from the acid. Speaking to her with the voice of her husband, the skeleton comes after her. In a panic she too falls into the vat.

Loren then emerges from his hiding place behind two large wine barrels. Thanks to a contraption, he was able to manipulate a prop skeleton around the room.

Despite the sinister implications of the act, the audience actually gains some satisfaction when Loren manages to outwit his murderous wife and her lover.

While a fun and, at times, a scary movie, House on Haunted

Photos courtesy of Hollywood Canteen

Vincent Price clearly enjoys himself as he plays the role of Frederick Loren — a millionaire who is locked in a deadly battle of wits with his wife Annabelle, played by Carol Ohmart (right), and her secret lover.

Hill is definitely not in the same league as Castle's later masterpiece, Rosemary's Baby.

In fact, Castle's direction in House on Haunted Hill comes across as fairly flat. Castle is apparently satisfied to allow the actors to take control of their characters and drive the plot (although the opening sequence when the guests arrive by hearse, is inspired). With Price in the lead role, it probably isn't a bad strategy. Price is clearly in his element and plays the sinister, laconic Frederick Loren to perfection. He has fun with the role and the audience knows it immediately.

But even with Price's masterful performance the story leaves more than a few unanswered questions.

Chief among them is how dried blood on the ceiling suddenly begins to drip and what is the significance of having it drip on the hands of one of the guests — a guest, who despite warnings to the contrary, still manages to survive the evening.

The second major flaw in Robb White's story involves the house's caretakers.

The woman is supposedly blind, yet when Manning is surprised by her in the cellar at the beginning of the movie, she glides off as if on wheels and manages to navigate the cellar with no problems.

But, the story with its subplots, manages to overcome these (and a few other discrepancies) to a degree. After all, the basic prerequisite for such movies is for the audience to suspend their beliefs and allow themselves to be drawn into the story.

The house is a perfect blend of art deco and cobwebs. It's strange angles add to the sense of terror at night — a feature that is accentuated by flashes of lightning during the prerequisite storm. The house also comes complete with secret passages and acid vats in the floor, as well as severed heads hanging in closets and lying in unsuspecting women's suitcases.

This is one of those horror movies that is just great fun to watch.

No messages.

No statements.

Just a few drops of blood and lots of screams — most of them from Nora Manning.☆

Tell our advertisers Parsec sent you

V & L GIFTS SCI-FI & COLLECTABLES

- Star Wars to Jedi
- Star Trek
- Deep Space Nine
- Babylon 5
- Batman, Smurfs
- G.I. Joe
- Animaniacs
- Sea Quest
- Dr. Who
- Captain Planet
- Dino Riders
- Dick Tracy
- Garfield & Opus plush etc.

For showroom appointment call after 4 p.m. (closed Mondays)
Phone: (905)272-5597
Fax: (905)279-4570
Showroom, shipping & mailing address:
2455 Cawthra Rd., Unit 13, Mississauga, Ontario, L5A 3P1

The New Frontier

Supplier of science fiction & space model kits
Ask us about the Science Fiction Model Builders' Association
Visit our home page at:
http://infoweb.magi.com/~newfront
Catalogue available by email, and our web page, or send $1.00 to receive the catalogue by mail.
26076-72 Robertson Rd., Nepean, Ont., K2H 5Y8
Tel & Fax: (613) 831-7129
Internet email address: newfront@magi.com

HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN

VINTAGE MOVIE POSTERS
FINE FILM & TV MEMORABILIA
SPECIALTY NEW AND USED FILM BOOKS
1516 DANFORTH AVENUE
TORONTO, ONTARIO

Animation shines in Brain Dead 13

By
GREG VAILLANCOURT

Ok, here's the situation.

You're this computer repair guy/California wanna-be dude see, and you get a call to this dark foreboding castle where their system's gone down see. So like once you get to the mansion. . . . er castle, you are confronted by the evil lunatic out to control the planet.

After a few quick insults and a fast trip off a short dock, you find yourself at the bottom of the castle having to make your way up trying not to get killed by the evil loonie's henchmen in order to reach him and foil his nefarious plans.

This scenario may seem strange, but it isn't too far out for a computer repair person. Chances are a service call may be to an unusual locale with a more than unusual user/geek/novice/nerd/know-it-all. (I can associate so well with the role of Lance the repairperson.)

Anyone who has been playing on computers since the early 80's probably remembers the game Maniac Mansion.

It was a game where you — the player — led a group of teenagers through a mansion to foil the plans of the alien hosting owner. The game is a true classic and people on the Net still talk about it.

Brain Dead 13 shares much of the same ambience and a similar mansion-like atmosphere where you are just dying to figure out what or perhaps who is behind the next door. The game itself runs at break neck speed, though, and is only for those with a lot of patience.

As the computer repair guy, you have to match wits with Fritz the resident looney and stop his nefarious scheme to conquer the world.

Since this is a kind of cartoon cinema, the animation is first-rate and looks like something from a Disney film. The dialogue is similar to that from a Munsters episode except it goes much faster (to suit the pace of the game) and the jokes are much more plentiful.

As for the controls, the game is based around the animations so obviously, this is more of a show than a game. This is a weak point in my opinion, although this has become the norm in gaming today to appeal to a greater market. The number keypad controls the directions you move in and the spacebar makes things happen.

As mentioned earlier, this is a game that can WOW you for awhile but to play it religiously requires patience.

So if arcade games are your thing (where death is rampant and can be recovered from) then this is just up your alley.

Brain Dead 13 is made by ReadySoft from Markham, Ont., and requires the following: CDROM (300K/s or Better), 4MB RAM, VGA Display, 386 or faster processor and it supports Windows 95 (as an alternate operating system to DOS which it also supports), joystick or keyboard controls and all major soundcards.

If running it through Windows 95, I recommend you either have a good video card (i.e. ATI Mach 64, Diamond Stealth, etc.) or have it run as full screen rather than windowed since the animations will no longer match the audio (the voice dialogue will begin to double over if running the program in a window).

Brain Dead 13 is also available on every other platform in existence on our planet and who knows, maybe on others as well!

Before I go, if you see Fritz, tell him I'm not giving back his Swiss Army Chainsaw.

Awards nominations close

With the closing of nominations for the Aurora Awards on March 30, the second stage of the awards process begins.

At presstime, more than 90 nominations had been received. Organizers will be distributing voting ballots to book stores and to individuals beginning during the latter part of April.

The ballots will list the top five nominees in the following categories: Best Long-Form in English, Best Short-Form in English, Best Other Work in English, Best Long-Form in French, Best Short-Form in French, Best Other Work in French, Artistic Achievement, Fan Achievement (Organizational), Fan Achievement (Fanzine), Fan Achievement (Other).

Among the locations where the ballots are available is Bakka Books and Sci-Fi World in Toronto, White Dwarf Books in Vancouver and House of Speculative Fiction in Ottawa.

Ballots can also be obtained by sending an SASE to Prix Aurora Awards 1996, c/o Dennis Mullin, 6-69 Donald St., Kitchener, Ont., N2B 3G6.

The deadline for mail-in ballots is June 30. Voting is open to any Canadian citizen, although there is a $4 fee. The fee is included in the attending/supporting membership for Calgary's Con-Version/Canvention 16 — the site of the award presentation.

Information on the convention can be obtained by contacting chairman Gary Frei at 104-9540 Bonaventure Dr. SW., Calgary, AB.

Web Word

Okay, nowadays you can't talk about anime without mentioning . . . Sailor Moon.

And in case you're one of the few who doesn't know who or what Sailor Moon is, there's the Canadian Sailor Moon Web Page (http//www.escape.ca/~vcchaos/sm.htm).

The site is one of the more popular ones that we came across during our surfing expedition. In the three months prior to our visit, 18,287 people came acalling to learn about Sailor Moon and her friends.

And why not?

The site offers visitors a number of goodies from images of your favorite characters — ours is Neptune and Saturn — to download, two brief animation segments, the history of Sailor Moon, Frequently Asked Questions and Sailor Moon in Winnipeg.

❑❑❑

On the hunt for some science fiction information? Then call up the Canadian SF & F Resource Guide (you'll find Parsec is there too) at http://www.magi.com/~gonzo/cansfrg.html

❑❑❑

Terry Pratchett fans have a number of sites to choose from when they want to see what their counterparts from around the world have to say about the Discworld creator. Among the sites are:

HTTP://CONNEXUS.APANA.ORG.AU/~ORIN/PRATCHETT/FAQ.HTML and
HTTP://VANGOGH.CS.TCD.IE/CBUCKLEY/BOOKS/TERRY.HTML and
HTTP://LSPACE.CP.TN.TUDELFT.NL/FAQS/BIBIOGRAPHY.HTML.

❑❑❑

Got a taste for Bugs, Daffy or Tweety? Then surf up to the Looney Tunes Home Page. The page features all of the Warner Brothers standard bearers, as well as an Acme Page, Cartoon World and the highly-touted (at least by us) Michigan J. Frog Page.

The Looney Tunes page can be found at http://www.usyd.edu.au/~swishart/looney.html.

❑❑❑

What's green, pliable and not found in you laundry hamper? What else but Gumby! (or is Gumby a who?) You can locate Gumby, Pokey and the gang at http://www.xnet.com/~gumby/gumby.html. A word of warning though, when we checked out the page, portions of it were still under construction.

❑❑❑

Up for a little role playing? Then how about a game that combines the legend of King Arthur, Robin Hood and the Lord of the Rings? Then Nero Ashbury LARP may be for you.

Besides the game, you can also find mailing lists and a calendar at the site. The home page can be found at http://world.std.com/~Gadlen/nero.html.

❑ **W. Ritchie Benedict** is a writer based in Calgary, Alta. He is a regular contributor to Parsec's book review pages.

❑ **Brian Belfry** is a professional football columnist whose work appears in newspapers across Canada. His first published fiction, Tark, appeared in the first issue of Parsec.

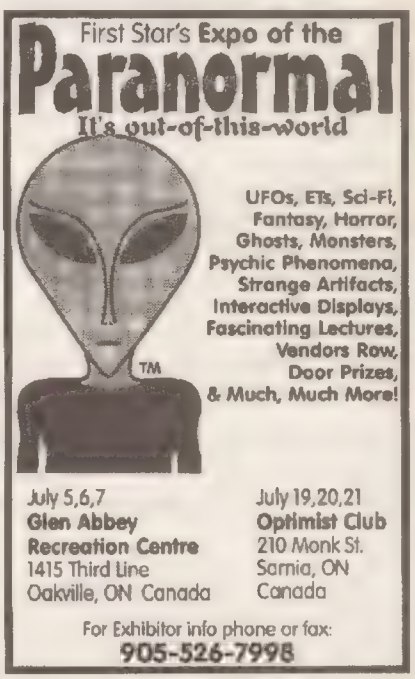
Who's Who

❑ **Stephanie Bedwell-Grime** has worked in nearly every medium imaginable. Her work often crosses not only media but genre barriers. She currently teaches in both the multimedia and digital animation programs at a Toronto-area college. Her work can be found in Northern Frights 3, After Hours, Writer's Block, Heliocentric Net, Romantic Interludes, Vampire's Crypt, Glimpses, Just Write, Scavenger's Newsletter and the Canadian Writer's Journal. Stories are due out in the anthologies, Northern Frights 4, A Horror Story A Day, Gaslight's The Female of the Species and in Northwords. Her novelette, Until Death, was recently released by Cogswell Publishing. Such Sweet Sorrow, a vampire story, was a 1995 Aurora Award nominee.

❑ Mississauga, Ont., writer **Ken Basarke** has previously been published in Asmonthly, Closeup and Infoserve. He is currently in the process of having his first novel, The Domus, published.

❑ **Gregg Chamberlain** is a Revelstock, B.C.-based writer. Besides providing book reviews for Parsec, he has also interviewed Sliders's executive producer Tracy Tormé for the next issue of Parsec.

❑ **Janet L. Hetherington** is an Ottawa-based freelance writer (and admitted X-Phile) who often writes about science fiction and comics.



From Page 7

Episodes 14 through 22 are currently being filmed with a lower budget.

The writer also claimed that, although filmed in Toronto, it is set in a nameless big city, U.S.A. Sorry, that's also wrong.

The opening credits clearly show the CN Tower and SkyDome and Toronto has been mentioned in the show (for instance, in the season episodes Dying For Fame and Spin Doctor). They've never tried to hide the fact it's Toronto.

Sure, it's Americanized a little (ie. Nick works at a precinct instead of a division), but it is Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

In the brain teaser quiz, one of the questions concerned, to paraphrase, what is the name of the fan club devoted to Lacroix?

The answer given was The Nigel Bennett News. Sorry. That's the newsletter put out by the Nigel Bennett Fan Club. Possibly he was thinking of the fan club, Les Enfants de Lacroix, as that certainly fits the question.

I would like to add this plea to my letter: please send letters to your local television station to let them know that you're watching the show and would like them to continue carrying it. Also write to Tristar and James Parriott.

Let me finish off this letter by saying the cover was wonderful, the article was adequate, the fiction was very good and I enjoyed the rest of the magazine.

Please continue to cover Forever Knight in your magazine.

ANNA SAWITZKY
Toronto

Star Trek phooey, Parsec yay

Dear Editor:

I have been reading your magazine since the first issue and I have watched it improve issue by issue. I am glad to see that, while other such publications, have come and gone, Parsec looks like it will be with us for a long time.

But I must confess that I became quite angry when I read the letter from Cassandra Milan. Her attack on Parsec was unwarranted (although I'll go along with her on her dislike of Star Trek). Even though I am not a fan of the series, I don't mind seeing such stories in the magazine. I realize that there are some who enjoy Star Trek, irregardless of what I have to say on the subject.

In closing, I am glad to see Parsec on the scene and I wish people such as Cassandra would merely keep their silly, mean-spirited opinion to themselves.

IAN McWHIRTER
Vancouver

Star Trek belongs in magazine

Dear Editor:

I've just finished reading issue four and I must say that I am delighted. The stories were interesting, well-written and intelligent. Finally, a great Canadian science fiction magazine.

However, the letter to the editor wasn't intelligent. Although I am unable to comment on the content of issue three, since I haven't read it, I strongly object to Cassandra Milan's Trek bashing.

Using Star Trek interviews in a science fiction magazine is extremely appropriate — especially since Star Trek **is** science fiction.

Sure there are plenty of strong science fiction authors before Star Trek was even conceived. But do you really believe, on this 30th anniversary, that science fiction would be what it is today without Star Trek?

I think not.

No no Cassandra, Parsec should be **commended**, and **you** should be ashamed of yourself.

JEFF HERSEY
Ottawa

Editor's note: I'd like to thank the readers who took the time to jot down a note or even call our offices to leap to our defence. It was much appreciated.

Some errors, omissions in story

Dear Editor:

As the director of Carver's Gate, I was pleased by the coverage you gave the film in your February/March issue. For the record, however, I would like to make a few corrections to the article.

Michael Paré, who plays Carver, did not star in the Philadelphia Story, of course, but rather The Philadelphia Experiment.

The photo captions misidentified an Outsider as Demon #1. The Outside pictured is played by Chris Culham, while Stephen (not Steven) Hart plays Demon One, which was not pictured in the article.

In addition, the cover photo was not credited. Your readers might be interested in knowing that the creature depicted thereon is an undead thing from the Afterlife game, as portrayed by David Scott, who was also responsible for the film's special effects make-up and creature effects and did an excellent job.

SHELDON INKOL
Toronto

Visit

our website

http://icewall.vianet.on.ca/comm/parsec

See what you missed and what's coming up in Parsec
Download photos of Parsec guests
See where the gang will turn up next

Next Month

Tracey Tormé

of

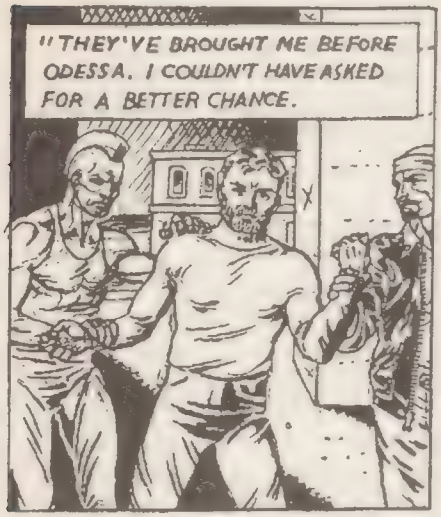
Sliders

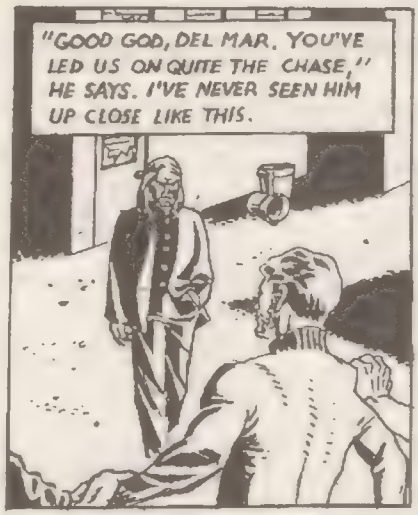
And Dr. Who too

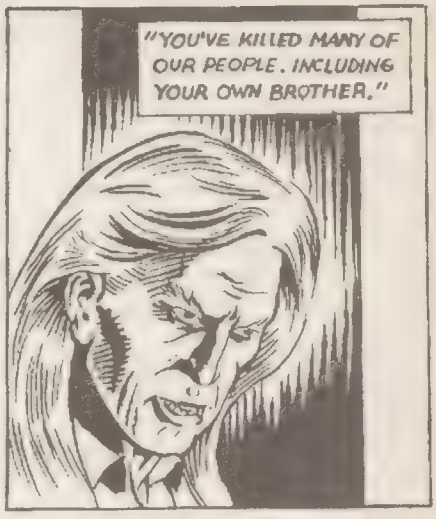
UNKNOWN FORCES

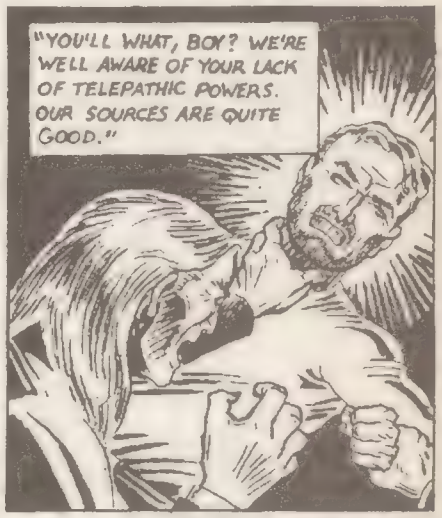
STORY: KENNEDY GORDON
PICTURES: JOHN TKACHUK

THE STORY: DEL MAR, CAPTURED BY THE TERRORISTS KNOWN AS DOMINATORS, HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO FACE THEIR LEADER.









PARSEC CONVENTIONS

April 13-14

Maritime Science Fiction Festival: Ramada Renaissance Park Centre, Dartmouth, N.S. Scheduled guests: Majel Barrett Roddenberry, Robert O'Reilly, Robin Curtis, Robert Llewellyn. Weekend pass is $45 ($40 if you mention seeing this listing). Information: 1-800-622-6199, P.O. Box 46021, Novalea RPO, Halifax, N.S. B3K 5V8 or MARKFEST@RA.ISISNET.COM.

May 17-20

Wolfcon 7: Old Orchard Inn, Wolfville, N.S. Information: P.O. Box 796, Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0.

CanCon '96: Tailsman Hotel, Ottawa, Ont. Scheduled guest: Robert Charles Wilson, Charles de Lint, Robert Sawyer. $20 in advance, $30 at door. Information: P.O. Box 5752, Merivale Depot, Nepean, Ont. K2C 3M1, (613) 738-1012, cancon@achilles.net, or http://www.achilles.net/~cancon/cancon.html.

May 17-19

Keycon XIII: Winnipeg, MB. Scheduled guest: Larry Niven. Information: P.O. Box 3178, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4E6.

V-Con 21: Richmond, B.C. Scheduled guests Kim Stanley, Don DeBrandt, William Gibson, Spider and Jeanne Robinson, Don DeBrandt. Registration $30. Information and registration: 110-1855 West 2nd Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6J 1J1. http//vanbc.wimsey.com/~lisac/v-con21.htm

June 7-9

Ad*Adstra 16: Yorkdale Holiday Inn, Toronto, Ont. Scheduled guest: David Hartwell. $25 pre-registration or $35 at door. Information: P.O. Box 7276, Station A, Toronto, Ont., M5W 1X9.

Non-profit groups are invited to submit information for their conventions.
Just mail it to Parsec or e-mail it to parsec@vianet.on.ca

July 19-21

Con-Version XIII: Glenmore Inn, Calgary, Alta. Scheduled guest: Mel Gilden. This is the site of this year's Aurora Awards. *Don't forget to vote.*

August 4-6

Toronto Trek 10: Regal Constellation Hotel, Toronto, Ont. Scheduled guest: Robert Picardo. Information: Suite 0116, Box 187, 65 Front St., Toronto M5J 1E6; (416) 699-4666 http://freenet.buffalo.edu/~startrek/toronto_trek.html.

September 14

Falcon: Lord Nelson Hotel, Halifax, N.S. Scheduled guests: Robert J. Sawyer, Peter Francis and Luisa Nadalini. Registration: $10 before Aug. 14, $12 at the door, $7 for children under 12. Information: P.O. Box 36123, Halifax, B3J 3S9; (902) 445-2281; Fax: (902) 422-7889; e-mail: gtucker@fox.nstn.ns.ca.

Oct. 24-27

NorthStar 1: Harrison Hot Springs Resort, Vancouver, B.C. Scheduled guests: S.M. Stirling and Graeme Cameron. For information: (800) 665-5454.

The future is waiting for YOU at

CAN•CON '96

So just what are YOU waiting for?

May 17-20
The Talisman Hotel
Ottawa, Ontario

CAN•CON is Canada's premier celebration of science-fiction, fantasy, new and future technologies/sciences and speculative horror . . .

AN ENTERTAINING, INFORMATIVE BLEND OF CANADA'S FINEST!

Guest of Honour: Robert Charles Wilson
Guest of Honour: Charles de Lint
Special Guest: Robert J. Sawyer

Readings, workshops, seminars, discussions, hands-on learning, entertainment, Pure Fun Art Show, computer expo, book/other vendors

Register early! $25 until May 1 or $30 at the door. Please send your cheque or money order to the address below. Ask about discount air fares on Air Canada, discount car/van rentals and hotel rates.
For Info: Call (613) 761-7764 or 738-1012; e-mail cancon@achilles.net
World-Wide-Web http://www.achilles.net/cancon or write to P.O. Box 5752, Merivale Depot, Nepean, Ont., K2C 3M1

Parsec is a proud sponsor of CAN•CON '96

PARSEC BRAIN TEASERS

You've watched the episodes, you've checked out the web site, you've taken part in the Internet forums and even had some discussions with your friends over pizza. But what do you really know about the X-Files? Let's find out.

Source: The Official Guide to The X-Files, published by HarperCollins.

1) What does the "F" in "F. Emasculata" stand for?

2) How many languages other than English have appeared in X-Files?

3) Name the three women that Mulder has kissed on the series.

4) In the episode "Miracle Man," what was on Reverend Hartley's vanity licence plate?

5) When is Scully's birthday?

6) In Fallen Angel, Deep Throat gives Mulder a piece of advice (a warning really), what is it?

7) What is Scully's FBI ID number?

8) What is Scully's telephone number?

9) In the episode Squeeze, what is Eugene Toom's address?

10) In the series' pilot, it is revealed that Mulder has earned a nickname among his colleagues. What is it?

11) Where was Mulder educated and what is he — besides being an FBI agent?

12) What is the name of Mulder's three rather paranoid friends who provide him with information from time to time?

13) What was the name of the only date Scully has had during the series?

14) What was Scully's father's rank in the armed forces?

15) What were the nicknames Scully and her father gave each other and from what literary work were the names taken?

16) What is Scully's own X-File number?

17) When Mulder's sister is abducted, what game were they playing?

18) What's her name?

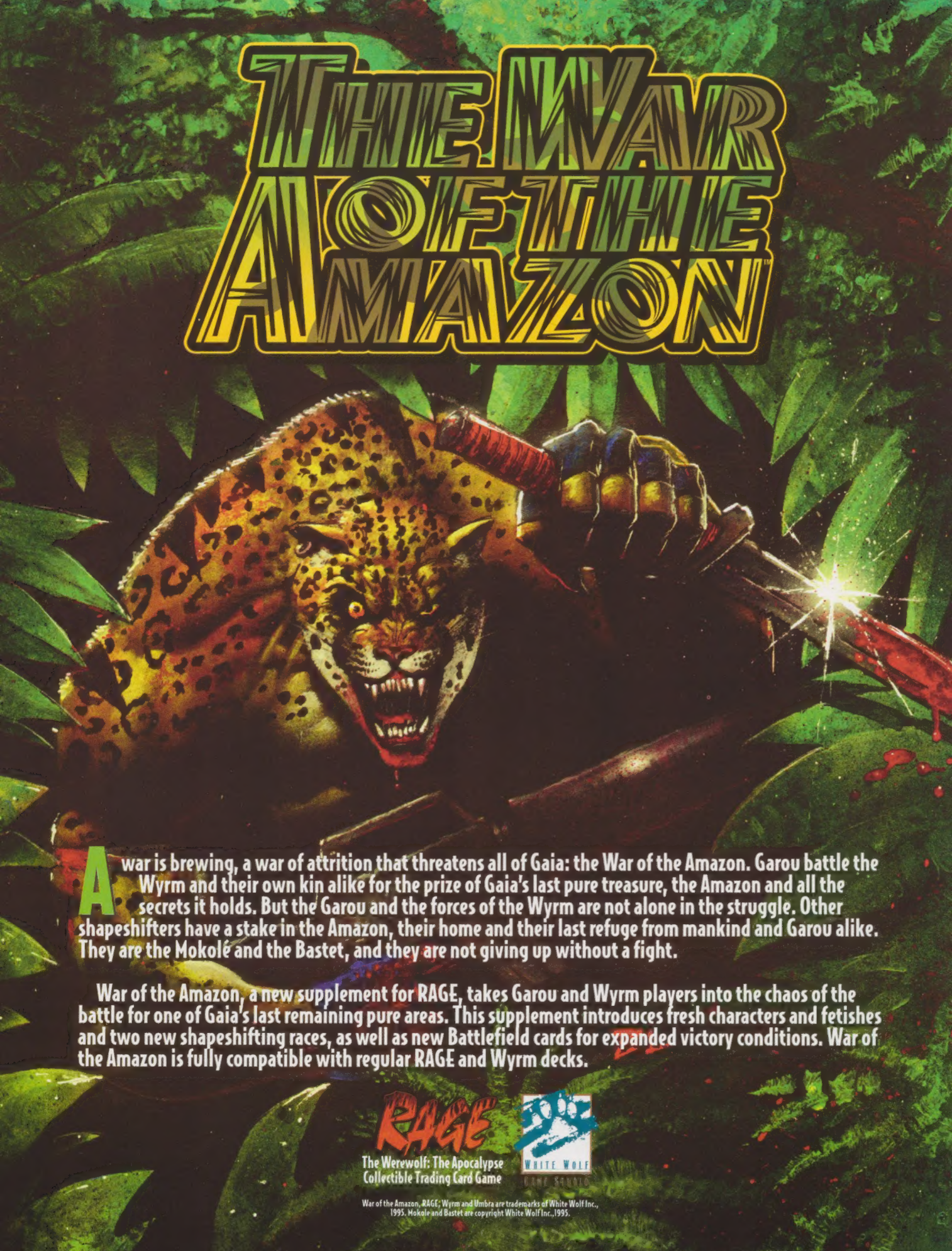
19) There is a baseball cap that hangs on Mulder's coat tree. What initials appear on the hat and what do they stand for?

20) Who was Mulder's first arrest after joining the FBI?

1) Facipbaga; (2) 13; (3) Phoebe Green, Kristen Kilar and his mother; (4) Bheald; (5) February 23; (6) "Keep your friends close, but keep your enemies closer; (7) 2317-616; (8) (202) 555-6431; (9) 66 Exeter Street; (10) Spooky; (11) Oxford, psychologist; (12) The Lone Gunmen; (13) Rob; (14) Captain; (15) Scully's is Starbuck and her father's is Ahab, Moby Dick; (16) X73317; (17) Stratego; (18) Samantha; (19) NICAP — National Investigative Committee on Aerial Phenomena; (20) John Barnett.

Scoring:

1-5: The truth? You can't handle the truth!
6-10: You're due for a visit from the cigarette-smoking man.
11-15: Mr. X is quite pleased that he didn't have to give you a hand like he does with Mulder.
16-19: Skinner has written a favourable review.
20: Feel free to try your hand at solving an X-File.



A war is brewing, a war of attrition that threatens all of Gaia: the War of the Amazon. Garou battle the Wyrm and their own kin alike for the prize of Gaia's last pure treasure, the Amazon and all the secrets it holds. But the Garou and the forces of the Wyrm are not alone in the struggle. Other shapeshifters have a stake in the Amazon, their home and their last refuge from mankind and Garou alike. They are the Mokolé and the Bastet, and they are not giving up without a fight.

War of the Amazon, a new supplement for RAGE, takes Garou and Wyrm players into the chaos of the battle for one of Gaia's last remaining pure areas. This supplement introduces fresh characters and fetishes and two new shapeshifting races, as well as new Battlefield cards for expanded victory conditions. War of the Amazon is fully compatible with regular RAGE and Wyrm decks.

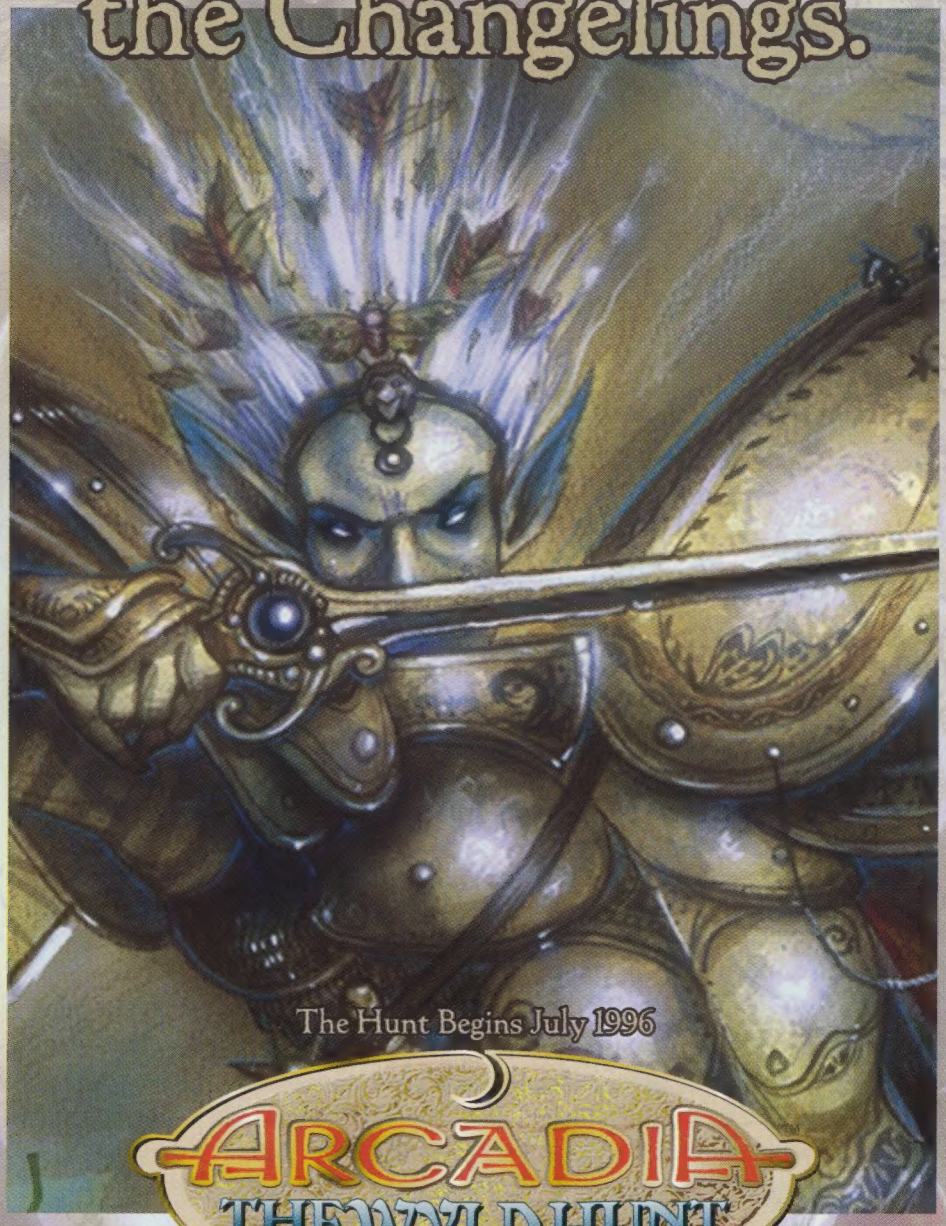
RAGE

The Werewolf: The Apocalypse Collectible Trading Card Game

WHITE WOLF GAME STUDIO

War of the Amazon, RAGE, Wyrm and Umbra are trademarks of White Wolf Inc., 1995. Mokolé and Bastet are copyright White Wolf Inc., 1995.

An Epic Journey Through the Mystical Homeland of the Changelings.



The Hunt Begins July 1996

ARCADIA THE WYLD HUNT

The Changeling Adventure Card Game

ARCADIA: THE WYLD HUNT - THE MOST REVOLUTIONARY ADVENTURE CARD GAME EVER!

- No Starter Deck. A Character Booster and a Story Booster are all you need to begin.
- An ongoing quest. The story has a conclusion, but no two journeys are the same.
- A character-based adventure combining the best elements of both cards and roleplaying.
- A look at Arcadia, long hidden from the World of Darkness. Be among the first to journey through this mystic land.

WHITE WOLF GAME STUDIO

Arcadia: The Wyld Hunt, Character Booster, Story Booster, **World of Darkness**, and **Changeling: The Dreaming** are Trademarks of **White Wolf Inc.**